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OPERATIONS
IN THE
PACIFIC OCEAN AREAS
DURING THE MONTH OF
JANUARY 1945



COMMANDER IN CHIEF
U. S. PACIFIC FLEET AND PACIFIC OCEAN AREAS

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UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
AND PACIFIC OCEAN AREAS
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

A16-3/FF12

Serial: 003541

31 July 1945.

S-E-C-R-E-T

From: Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas.
To: Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet.

Subject: Operations in Pacific Ocean Areas - January 1945.

References: (a) CinCPac Secret letter A6-5, serial 003542, dated
31 July 1945.
(b) CinCPac Conf. letter A6-5, serial 031640, dated
31 July 1945.

Enclosures: (See Table of Contents following).

1. Subject report is forwarded herewith.
2. References (a) and (b) contain most of the source materials on which this report is based.
3. The operations described herein include those of the SOUTHWEST PACIFIC Area for the same period in order to show their relationship with concurrent operations in the PACIFIC Ocean Areas.
4. This report is **SECRET**, and shall be safeguarded in accordance with the provisions of Article 76, U.S. Navy Regulations, 1920.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

		Reference numbers are to Page and Paragraph
PART I. <u>INTRODUCTION</u> - - - - -	- 1	1 - 6
PART II. <u>LOSSES</u> - - - - -	- 2	7 - 8
PART III. <u>NORTH PACIFIC</u> - - - - -	2 - 4	9 - 21
A. Surface Operations - - - - -	2 - 3	9 - 13
B. Land-Based Air Operations - - - - -	3 - 4	14 - 21
PART IV. <u>CENTRAL PACIFIC</u> - - - - -	4 - 37	22 - 228
A. THIRD Fleet Operations - - - - -	4 - 23	22 - 125
Tasks Assigned; Enemy Situation; Com- position of Task Force 38 and Service Groups; Situation on 30 December; Attacks on FORMOSA 3-4 January; Attacks on LUZON 6-7 January; Operations in the South CHINA Sea 10-19 January; Attacks on FORMOSA 21 January; NANSEI SHOTO Strike 22 January; Night Operations During January; Operations of THIRD Fleet Service Groups; Summary.		
B. Land-Based Air Operations - - - - -	23 - 32	126 - 190
General; Operations of the XXI Bomber Command; Operations Against IWO JIMA; Attacks on CHICHI JIMA; Attacks on HAHA JIMA; Search Reconnaissance and Anti- Shipping Missions; Operations Against Rear and By-Passed Areas; Enemy Air Attacks on Our Bases.		
C. Minor Operations- - - - -	32 - 37	191 - 228
Operation Against CHICHI JIMA, HAHA JIMA, and IWO JIMA, 5 January; Operations Against IWO JIMA, 24 January; Minor Bombardments; Reconnaissance of JALUIT Atoll; Occupation of FAIS Island; Enemy Activity.		
PART V. <u>SUBMARINES</u> - - - - -	37 - 46	229 - 272
A. Operations of Pacific Fleet Submarines - - - - -	37 - 44	229 - 262
January Results Pacific Ocean Areas; Coordinated Attack Groups; Individual Patrols; Submarines Lost		

S E C R E T

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

		Reference numbers are to <u>Page</u> and <u>Paragraph</u>	
B. Anti-Submarine Activity - - - - -	45 - 46	263 - 272	
General; Planes of VPB-111; Sinking of Midget Submarine by LST 225; Attack by USS FLEMING; CONKLIN, CORBESIER, RABY Killer Group.			
PART VI. <u>SOUTHWEST PACIFIC</u> - - - - -	47 - 63	273 - 390	
A. General - - - - -	47 - 48	273 - 278	
B. The LINGAYEN Operation - - - - -	48 - 59	279 - 366	
Object and Concept of the Operation; Gen- eral Situation (Enemy and Own); The Land- ing Area; Organization of Naval Forces; Supporting Forces; Movement of Advanced Groups; Attacks on Advanced Groups During Approach; Operations in LINGAYEN Area; Passage of Attack Forces; The Landing; Enemy Attacks in the Landing Area; With- drawal of Assault Shipping; Reinforcement and Supply; Ground Operations; Minor Supporting Landings.			
C. Southwest Pacific Losses - - - - -	- 59	367 - 369	
SEVENTH Fleet Losses; Enemy Losses; Aircraft Losses.			
D. Operations of SEVENTH Fleet Submarines - -	- 60	370 - 372	
Summary of Ships Sunk or Damaged; Analysis; Important Patrols.			
E. Anti-Submarine Activity - - - - -	60 - 61	373 - 379	
F. Land-Based Air Operations - - - - -	61 - 63	380 - 390	
Air Support of LUZON Operations; Aerial Activity in Other Sectors; Summary; Dis- position of Aircraft in the PHILIPPINES in December and January 1944-45.			
PART VII. <u>MISCELLANEOUS</u> - - - - -	64 - 66	391 - 413	
A. Units Reporting to the Pacific Fleet - - -	- 64	391 - 392	
B. Major Command Changes - - - - -	- 64	393 - 395	
C. Casualties to Vessels - - - - -	64 - 65	396 - 404	
USS MAZAMA (AE-9); LCI(L) 600; LCI(G) 396; LARDNER (DD-487); SERPENS (AK-97); EXTRACTOR (ARS-15); LCI(G) 404; YP 73.			

S E C R E T

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

		Reference numbers are to
		<u>Page</u> and <u>Paragraph</u>
D. Operations of British East Indies Fleet - - -	- 66	405 - 410
E. CHINA Based Air Forces - - - - -	- 66	411 - 413
ANNEX A. <u>COMMENTS AND CONCLUSIONS</u> - - - - -	- 67	- 1

LIST OF PLATES.

PLATE I. Allied Air Strikes, Central, South and Southwest Pacific - January 1945.	Facing page 23.
PLATE II. Fast Carrier Force Operations - January 1945.	End of Report..
PLATE III. Invasion of LUZON - 9 January 1945.	End of Report.
PLATE IV. USS BARB Attacks on Anchored Convoy in NAMKWAN Harbor - 23 January 1945.	Facing page 39.
PLATE V. U. S. Progress Ashore LUZON and MINDORO - 31 January 1945.	End of Report.
PLATE VI. U. S. Progress Ashore VISAYAN Area and MINDANAO - 31 January 1945.	End of Report.

PART I.

INTRODUCTION.

1. The outstanding events in the Pacific War during the month of January 1945 were:

(a) The amphibious invasion of LUZON via LINGAYEN Gulf, initiated by Southwest Pacific Forces on 9 January;

(b) The heavy suicide attacks on our shipping by "Kamikaze" pilots, which sank or badly damaged nearly 30 combatant vessels participating in the invasion, and which for the first time became a really serious menace to the success of an operation; and

(c) The sweep of the THIRD Fleet forces under Admiral W. F. Halsey into the hitherto enemy-dominated South CHINA Sea, as a measure for covering the invasion.

2. In this invasion, larger than any previous one in the Pacific, naval forces of the Pacific Fleet were heavily committed, either in the form of combatant and transport shipping temporarily placed under SEVENTH Fleet command, or as covering forces. In the latter function, the Fast Carrier Task Force of the THIRD Fleet not only maintained neutralization of enemy air strength in FORMOSA, Northern LUZON, and the NANSEI SHOTO, but also made the sweep of the South CHINA Sea, referred to above. During this sweep, they were unfortunate in failing to locate major enemy fleet units, but in spite of heavy weather, were successful in causing great destruction of enemy shipping and previously secure harbor installations.

3. Land-based air forces of all major Pacific commands and the CHINA theater were also active in direct or indirect support of the LINGAYEN Operation. The British, in addition to an amphibious operation against the AKYAB Area in BURMA, conducted a carrier strike against SUMATRA.

4. During January, in preparation for future operations in the Central Pacific Areas, there were two surface bombardments of IWO JIMA, in one of which HAHARA JIMA and CHICHI JIMA were also bombarded. In coordination with these bombardments, land-based air forces of the Central Pacific made daily raids on IWO JIMA, and maintained neutralization of enemy-held islands in the Forward and Rear Areas. The B-29s of the XXI Bomber Command, principally engrossed in long-range strategic bombing of the Japanese homeland, also contributed substantial bomb loads to nearer targets such as IWO JIMA.

5. There was a marked decrease in submarine successes, as compared with previous months, both in Central Pacific and Southwest Pacific Areas. This was to be expected in view of the interdiction of enemy shipping routes to the south, as well as the cumulative effect of his heavy losses of the past. In partial compensation for this scarcity of targets, submarines showed increased usefulness in lifeguard missions.

6. Unless otherwise noted, local times and dates are used throughout this report.

PART II.

LOSSES.

7. The following is a summary of losses suffered by the forces under Cincpac-Cincpoa, and of the losses which these forces inflicted upon the enemy. This tabulation does not include losses in the Southwest Pacific Area, which appear in this report in the pages devoted to the summary of that area.

8. Losses for the Pacific Ocean Areas were:

<u>UNITED STATES</u>	<u>Ship Losses</u>	<u>JAPANESE</u>
<u>Sunk:</u>	<u>Sunk:</u>	
Combatant: - 1 SS.	Combatant: - 2 DD, 14 DE, 9 PC, 1 SS (probably sunk), 1 midget SS, 1 midget SS (probably sunk).	
Auxiliary: - 1 AK, 1 ARS, 1 LCI, 1 YP.	Auxiliary: - 63 AK, 28 AO, 2 AP, 3 APD, 1 LSM, 1 AP/AK, 89 small craft.	
<u>Damaged:</u>	<u>Damaged:</u>	
Combatant: - 3 CV, 2 CVE, 10 DD, 1 DE, 1 PC.	Combatant: - 1 SS, 9 DD, 9 DE, 13 PC.	
Auxiliary: - 1 AG, 4 APA, 1 AVD, 2 AO, 4 LCI, 1 LST, 1 AKA, 1 ATF, 1 AE.	Auxiliary: - 4 AP, 22 AO, 70 AK, 2 AP/AK, 3 U/D, 139 small craft.	

Aircraft Losses

U. S. losses in combat missions, whether from enemy action or operational: 231	Estimated enemy planes destroyed: *
(This includes 26 B-29s of the XXI Bomber Command lost on combat missions, weather flights or photographic reconnaissance missions.)	In the air..... 305
	On the ground..... 438
	Suicide crashes... 3
	By AA fire..... 0
	Total..... 746

* NOTE: The figures of enemy losses in the air do not include "probables"; and those for planes destroyed on the ground are based for the most part on photographic evidence. The figures for enemy planes destroyed in the air include 141 shot down by B-29s of the XXI Bomber Command.

PART III.

NORTH PACIFIC.

A. SURFACE OPERATIONS.

9. On 5 January, Task Force 92 conducted the fifth naval bombardment of the KURILES. In accordance with the usual policy, suitable frontal weather, which would

S E C R E T

afford good concealment, and at the same time allow a high sustained speed in retirement out of range of enemy aircraft, without causing damage to the ships from pounding in heavy seas, was to be utilized for the approach and retirement. For this bombardment, weather was extremely favorable.

10. Task Force 92, under the command of Rear Admiral J. L. McCrea, and consisting of the OCLs RICHMOND (F), TRENTON, and CONCORD, with the DDs ROWE (F), SMALLEY, STODDARD, WATTS, WREN, BEARSS, JOHN HOOD, JARVIS, and PORTER (DesRon 57), sortied from ATTU on 3 January. The speed was adjusted to arrive off the target area too late in the evening for strong air opposition to be organized before dark, after our forces should be detected by enemy radar.

11. Bombardment was started at 2020 on 5 January, and continued for 20 minutes by radar control. A total of 1455 six-inch shells and 4024 five-inch shells was fired at designated targets, the main targets being a fish cannery at SURABACHI WAN, PARAMUSHIRO, and air installations in the vicinity.

12. Excellent photographic coverage on the next day showed extensive damage in the area, with the air strip rendered temporarily unserviceable.

13. Retirement at a sustained speed of 25 knots was without incident. Air cover was provided by B-25s during part of the next day. Similar cover by Army B-24s had been planned for the last day of the approach, but the aircraft failed to make actual contact with the task force. Other activities of Task Force 92 during the month included normal upkeep and gun practices.

B. LAND-BASED AIR OPERATIONS.

14. Fifteen missions were flown by Task Force 90 aircraft during January, in the course of which 26 tons of bombs were dropped on land targets. By comparison, five missions were flown in December 1944, with eight tons of bombs dropped.

15. SURABACHI WAN, in PARAMUSHIRO, was bombed four times with a total of 13 tons; three tons were dropped on KURABU ZAKI, and one half ton on KASHIWABARA, PARAMUSHIRO. In addition, KATAOKA, SHIMUSHU, was hit with two tons, and MATSUWA and OKENOTAN each received small amounts. Most of the bombing was done by Liberator aircraft.

16. Good photographs of airfields at KASHIWABARA, SURIBACHI, KATUMABETSU, KURABU, and KATAOKA were obtained. In addition, air cover was flown for the bombardment mission of Task Force 92, and a radar ferret mission was flown along the northern KURILE Chain.

17. TORISHIMA RETTO was hit with about six tons of bombs by Mitchells in two missions, and rockets were used for the first time in the North Pacific by Venturas which attacked KOKUTAN ZAKI, SHIMUSHU, scoring at least 14 direct hits. Venturas also conducted an unproductive anti-shipping sweep.

18. Japanese fighter opposition increased over the previous month, with a total sighted of about 35 airborne fighters, 3 twin-engined planes, and 8 fighters on the ground at KATAOKA. Totals claimed for the month in the KURILES were 3 enemy aircraft shot down, 5 probably destroyed, and 6 damaged.

19. Our air combat losses were two Liberators, one of which proceeded to

S E C R E T

neutral territory after developing engine trouble over the target. Five other Army aircraft were lost operationally.

20. Partial or complete sector searches were flown from ATTU on 20 days during January, inclement weather preventing operations during the remainder of the month.

21. Six probable Japanese balloons were sighted during the month, two of which were shot down, and another recovered at MARSHALL, ALASKA.

PART IV.

CENTRAL PACIFIC.

A. THIRD FLEET OPERATIONS.

(See Plate II)

Tasks Assigned.

22. The operation of greatest importance during January in the Pacific Ocean was the invasion of LUZON in the PHILIPPINE Islands by forces under the operational control of General of the Army D. MacArthur, Commander in Chief, Southwest Pacific Area. This operation was a natural sequence to the landings on LEYTE and MINDORO, but was of considerably greater scope, and it involved cooperation between forces not under the same command to a greater degree than had been the case in most previous operations.

23. A large part of the naval forces directly participating had been allocated from the U. S. Pacific Fleet to Vice Admiral T. C. Kinkaid, Commander Allied Naval Forces, Southwest Pacific Area for this operation. Southwest Pacific and Pacific Fleet submarines were to cooperate in extensive reconnaissance and interdiction of enemy approach routes from the EMPIRE and the SINGAPORE Areas. The CHINA-based Fourteenth Air Force and Twentieth Air Force were to intensify air attacks on enemy positions in CHINA, FORMOSA, and the EMPIRE. Heavy Twentieth Air Force attacks on FORMOSA were to be coordinated with attacks by THIRD Fleet air forces. Long range searches by Southwest Pacific, Central Pacific, and CHINA-based planes were to cover virtually every possible route of approach by enemy vessels to the scene of the operation. Air strikes against the PHILIPPINES by Southwest Pacific Forces, and by Carrier-based planes of the THIRD Fleet (Task Force 38), were coordinated by designating the northern part of LUZON for normal THIRD Fleet operations and the southern part for strikes by Southwest Pacific Forces.

24. It was in providing fleet cover and support for the LUZON landings that THIRD Fleet forces were primarily engaged during January. The principal tasks assigned the Fast Carrier Task Force were: (1) Destroying hostile naval and air forces and shipping in the RYUKYUS, FORMOSA, CHINA Coast, and LUZON Area prior to S-Day, the day scheduled for the LINGAYEN Gulf landings, (2) Neutralizing hostile air and naval forces in the FORMOSA, CHINA Coast, Northern LUZON Area immediately preceding S-Day if required to cover passage of the assault forces to LUZON, and (3) Striking hostile objectives as required by the existing situation subsequent to S-Day. In this connection, on 28 December, Cincpac-Cincpoa directed the attack and destruction of heavy units of the Japanese Fleet, when located, in the South CHINA Sea. Detailed photographic coverage of certain areas in the NANSEI SHOTO was also assigned as a task to be accomplished during the cover of the LINGAYEN landings, but only if it fitted in with the normal strategic covering operations;

S E C R E T

otherwise it was to be done upon release from the covering mission but prior to return to base.

Enemy Situation.

25. It was anticipated that the enemy would commit his total available air strength in opposition to the LUZON landings. This strength was believed to aggregate approximately 300 planes in the PHILIPPINES, nearly all of which were based on LUZON. A slightly larger total was considered to be based in FORMOSA and the NANSEI SHOTO; and these could be substantially reinforced if the enemy chose to do so. Most of the enemy combatant ships which remained undamaged were believed to be located in the Cape ST. JACQUES-CAMRANH Bay area, 600 miles west of LUZON. Night raids by some or all of these ships in opposition to the LUZON landings were likely. Lack of daylight air cover would probably prevent enemy surface forces closing the west coast of LUZON in the daytime.

Composition of Task Force 38 and Service Groups.

26. Task Force 38 and Service Groups, as part of the THIRD Fleet under Admiral Halsey, was composed during the month of January as follows:

Task Force 38 - Vice Admiral J. S. McCain.

Task Group 38.1 - Rear Admiral A. W. Radford.

YORKTOWN	2 CV	SOUTH DAKOTA	2 BB	COLAHAN	17 DD	LYMAN K. SWENSON
WASP		MASSACHUSETTS		BENHAM		COLLETT
				YARNALL		MADDOX
CABOT	2 CVL	SAN FRANCISCO	3 CA	STOCKHAM		BLUE
COWPENS		BALTIMORE		WEDDERBURN		BRUSH
		BOSTON		CUSHING		TAUSSIG
				MANSFIELD		SAMUEL N. MOORE
		SAN DIEGO	1 CL(AA)	DeHAVEN		UHLMANN
						TWINING

Task Group 38.2 - Rear Admiral G. F. Bogan.

LEXINGTON	3 CV	NEW JERSEY	2 BB	OWEN	14 DD	ENGLISH
HANCOCK		WISCONSIN		MILLER		SPERRY
HORNET				THE SULLIVANS		AULT
				STEPHEN POTTER		WALDRON
		PASADENA	3 CL	HUNT		HAYNSWORTH
		ASTORIA		LEWIS HANCOCK		WEEKS
		WILKES-BARRE		MARSHALL		HANK
		SAN JUAN	1 CL(AA)			

S E C R E T

Task Group 38.3 - Rear Admiral F. C. Sherman.

ESSEX (2 CV)	WASHINGTON (2 BB)	GATLING	KNAPP (17 DD)
TICONDEROGA	NORTH CAROLINA	C. K. BRONSON	PORTERFIELD
		COTTEN	CALLAGHAN
LANGLEY (2 CVL)	SANTA FE (4 CA)	DORTCH	CASSIN YOUNG
SAN JACINTO	VINCENNES	HEALY	PRESTON
	MIAMI	COGSWELL	LAWS
	BILOXI	CAPERTON	LONGSHAW
		INGERSOLL	PRICHETT
	FLINT (1 CL(AA))		HALSEY POWELL

Task Group 38.5 - Rear Admiral M. B. Gardner.

ENTERPRISE (1 CV(N))	McCORD	FRANKS (6 DD)
	TRATHEN	BUCHANAN
INDEPENDENCE (1 CVL(N))	HAZELWOOD	HAGGARD

Task Group 30.8 - Captain J. T. Acuff.

NEHENTA BAY (7 CVE)	WELLES (9 DD)	HILBERT	REYNOLDS (18 DE)
RUDYERD BAY	EVANS	LAMONS	WESSON
CAPE ESPERANCE	GATLING	CROWLEY	MITCHELL
SARGENT BAY	HICKOX	SAMUEL S. MILES	BANGUST
KWAJALEIN	MACDONOUGH	O'NEILL	SWEARER
ALTAMAHA	FARRAGUT	STERN	GEORGE
SHIPLEY BAY	THORN	LAKE	RIDDLE
	HOBBY	WEAVER	LYMAN
	TRATHEN	THATCHER	KYNE

ATASCOSA	CHIKASKIA	KENNEBAGO	MONONGAHELA	PAMANSET (25 AO)
AUCILLA	CIMARRON	MANATEE	NANTAHALA	PATUXENT
CACHE	ESCALANTE	MARIAS	NECHES	SAUGATUCK
CALIENTE	GUADALUPE	MERRIMACK	NEOSHO	TALUGA
CHICOPEE	KANKAKEE	MILLICOMA	NIOBRARA	TOMAHAWK

HITCHITI, JICARILLA, MATACO, MOLALA, ZUNI (5 ATF)

Task Group 30.7 - Captain G. C. Montgomery.

ANZIO (1 CVE); LAWRENCE C. TAYLOR, OLIVER MITCHELL, ROBERT F. KELLER (3 DE)

Minor alterations in the force's composition are not included above. Task Group 38.5 was formed as a night carrier group when ENTERPRISE reported on 5 January. Normally the units of this group were assigned to Task Group 38.2 and operated within the screen of 38.2 during daylight. It operated independently when directed by Commander Task Force 38. The formation of this semi-separate night carrier task group was the first occasion upon which more than one night carrier had been available to the Fast Carrier Task Force, and was the first time that a large carrier had been used in combat operations, with night operation its primary mission.

S E C R E T

Situation on 30 December.

27. The Fast Carrier Task Force had not had a particularly strenuous month from a combat standpoint during December, its activities being limited for the most part to one three-day strike on LUZON in support of the MINDORO landings. Nevertheless, in the severe typhoon which the force had experienced on 18 December a number of ships had been damaged, and many combat aircraft had been lost. The succeeding days until 29 December were employed at ULITHI for repair and replenishment; and by that date the force was ready to support the seizure of LUZON by Southwest Pacific Forces.

28. During the days at ULITHI, the aircraft complement of certain of the larger carriers was changed to consist of 91 fighters and 15 torpedo planes, an increase in the proportion of the former. Two Marine fighter squadrons, equipped with F4U aircraft, were placed aboard ESSEX, making the first use of Marine fighter pilots with the Fast Carrier Task Force.

29. The force sortied ULITHI on 30 December, and after training and fueling en route, arrived in launching position off its first targets (FORMOSA and the NANSEI SHOTO) on 3 January. The usual pre-strike dummy communication transmissions were used to deceive the Japanese as to the time and place of the attack. PB4Y interdiction flights also were ordered to assist the force in arriving off its objective undetected. Surprise again was achieved. The launching point to the south and east of FORMOSA was approximately 140 miles from the nearer FORMOSA airfields, and 210 miles from the PESCADORES Islands and northern FORMOSA.

Attacks on FORMOSA 3-4 January.

30. The primary mission of the force on 3 and 4 January was destruction of enemy aircraft at FORMOSA. To attain this objective, southern FORMOSA and the PESCADORES Islands were assigned to Task Group 38.2 for coverage; central FORMOSA as well as OKINAWA and SAKISHIMA GUNTO were to be covered by Task Group 38.3, while northern FORMOSA was allotted to Task Group 38.1. Except for the long range strikes to the NANSEI SHOTO, the tactics adopted were similar to those used in December strikes against LUZON, when combat air patrols over enemy airfields were maintained.

31. With the arrival of the task force at the launching point, the force experienced the first of the almost continuous bad weather which was to hamper its air attacks throughout the month of January. A heavy front lay between it and the target, and pilots on the pre-dawn launch had to make their way to FORMOSA through almost solid weather, with bottom at a few hundred feet at best, and top at 17,000 to 20,000 feet. On this strike a considerable number of the pilots were unable to reach the target. By mid-morning, weather conditions had improved somewhat, but again became so bad in the afternoon that all strike planes were recalled. A similar situation existed on the next day when strikes were resumed; and again projected strikes had to be curtailed.

32. During the two strike days, air opposition was light at the target and practically non-existent near the force. Only 30 enemy planes were shot down during the two-day period. Eleven of these were destroyed in one VF sweep by TICONDEROGA fighters. Weather conditions made strafing attacks on grounded aircraft difficult, and results of the bombing were largely unobserved. Despite these handicaps, 81 enemy aircraft were reported destroyed on the ground. Efforts to "blanket" the target with continuous air patrols during the two-day period were frustrated by weather.

S E C R E T

33. A considerable volume of merchant shipping was located in harbors along the west coast of FORMOSA. Of these, four escorts, a medium freighter, and a medium oiler were sunk off TAKAO. One large and 6 small freighters, together with 28 luggers, were also sunk. Fifteen other ships, exclusive of luggers, were damaged.

34. During the two-day period, 1595 fighter plane sorties were flown. Approximately half of these were defensive sorties for patrol of the force. The balance were searches (89 sorties) and attacks on enemy targets (719 sorties). Of the offensive fighter sorties, only 219 carried bombs, 203 fired rockets, and the rest strafed. The aggregate weight of bombs carried by fighters was only 65 tons, or approximately 180 pounds per offensive fighter sortie. This average weight per fighter plane sortie was less than one-seventh that of the 1350 pounds carried on the average scout-bomber-torpedo sortie.

35. Several factors contributed to make the FORMOSA Strikes of 3-4 January less effective than had been the case on a number of prior carrier task force operations. The first of these was the bad weather. Also the flight schedule had been set up on a basis which contemplated blanketing operations by successive patrols taking off and landing at regular intervals. The area to be covered included southern FORMOSA on the southwest, and central OKINAWA 450 miles away to the northeast. With the force concentrated for mutual protection, flight distances to and from the targets were large; those to OKINAWA particularly being at extreme range. In an attempt to meet the schedule originally planned, attacks by some aircraft had to be hurried, and others were unable to reach their targets at all. The excellence of enemy camouflage made location of targets difficult in the limited time allotted for each mission. These factors, in combination with the high proportion of defensive sorties which were flown and the limited bomb loads carried by fighter aircraft, necessarily affected strike results.

36. Our own aircraft losses during the two days of operation were comparatively high, being reported as 18 in combat and 14 operationally. Pilots and aircrewmembers reported lost totalled 18 in combat and 4 operationally. The adverse weather conditions undoubtedly contributed to the losses sustained.

37. After recovering strike aircraft on the afternoon of the 4th, the force retired to fuel. It was joined by ENTERPRISE (CV(N)) and escorts during the 5th, thus giving the force greater night strength than at any previous time during the war.

Attacks on LUZON 6-7 January.

38. Ships participating in the LUZON invasion were operating in the LINGAYEN Area on and after the 6th of January, hence the destruction of enemy LUZON-based planes was imperative. The original area which had been allotted for coverage by THIRD Fleet planes included only the northern half of LUZON, leaving the more important fields to the south as the responsibility of Southwest Pacific land-based air forces and SEVENTH Fleet carrier forces. Early on the morning of 5 January, CinCSWPA requested that THIRD Fleet forces strike south of the normal dividing line in order to cover CLARK and ANGELES Fields. Commander THIRD Fleet thereupon changed his plan so as to extend the area of THIRD Fleet operations to the southward as far as MANILA Bay.

39. After completion of fueling on 5 January, the run in toward LUZON was commenced. At dawn on the 6th, the force was in launching position 120 miles, bearing 115°, from the northeast tip of LUZON. This position was approximately

S E C R E T

250 miles from the principal objectives, and it was from this distance that most of the attacks were launched during the two days of attack. Target assignments were as follows:

Task Group 38.1 - Airfields on the LUZON west coast from MANILA north, including NICHOLS, NIELSON, GRACE Park, PORAC, ANGELES, and DEL CARMEN.

Task Group 38.2 - Airfields in the CAGAYAN Valley and CLARK Field.

Task Group 38.3 - Airfields and shipping along the north and north-west coast of LUZON from VIGAN to APARRI, and the Islands of LUZON Straits south of BASHI Channel.

40. As at FORMOSA on the 3rd and 4th, flying conditions continued to be from undesirable to bad. As a result of these conditions, Commander Task Group 38.3 was compelled to hold up launching the first three strikes which had been planned on the 6th. This turned out to be not very serious, as the northern area assigned to this group was largely free from enemy aircraft.

41. The other task groups launched five to six strikes each from the large carriers, with additional planes from the CVLs. Japanese dispersal and camouflage, combined with the bad weather, served to reduce the effectiveness of our attacks, although most of the areas were covered by successive strikes.

42. Air opposition again was light, only 14 enemy planes being destroyed in the air and 18 on the ground. Our own losses totalled 17, most of which were operational. Photographs taken at the end of the day indicated that 237 enemy aircraft were apparently operational in LUZON, about 150 of which were hidden in the vicinity of the CLARK Fields.

43. In view of the evident lack of air opposition on the 6th, it is of interest to note that SEVENTH Fleet minesweeping and bombardment ships operating in the limited waters of LINGAYEN Gulf were nevertheless subjected to numerous attacks by enemy aircraft during the day, a total of 12 such ships being hit by Japanese suicide bombers. Further information on these attacks appears in the section of this report dealing with Southwest Pacific Operations.

44. The original plan of Commander THIRD Fleet had been to return to FORMOSA on the 7th, leaving the LUZON Fields to Southwest Pacific Forces. The withdrawal from LUZON was commenced as scheduled. Despatches from Commander SEVENTH Fleet, however, requested that the THIRD Fleet forces strike LUZON again on 7 January, giving special coverage of enemy airfields in the LINGAYEN Area (previously ordered reserved for CVE air operations), to assist in preventing further damage to the bombardment and minesweeping units in that Gulf. He further requested that consideration be given to moving the THIRD Fleet to the westward of LUZON to furnish direct air support in the objective area during the period the loaded transports were there.

45. As a result of these requests, at approximately 2100 on the night of the 6th the course of Task Force 38 was reversed, and it was directed to attack LUZON again on the 7th, rather than FORMOSA.

46. As the force arrived off LUZON for launching aircraft, weather in the launching area continued to be undesirable for flying. Throughout the day, however, it proved to be better over the target than it had been on the 6th. While

S E C R E T

strikes were launched and landed with difficulty, once launched they were more effective than had been the case previously. The northern part of LUZON (assigned to Task Group 38.3) continued to prove barren of enemy aircraft, but since good targets were reported to exist surrounding CLARK Field, the afternoon strikes from this group were diverted to aid Task Group 38.2 in covering the more important CLARK Field region. The latter group sent a substantial proportion of its attacks against fields near LINGAYEN.

47. As usual, enemy aircraft were widely dispersed and thoroughly camouflaged. They made difficult targets to locate on the ground. Results were satisfactory, however, 75 being destroyed and an additional four being shot down in the air. The air blanket maintained over LUZON airfields during the day was generally successful in smothering Japanese air effort, and in protecting the LINGAYEN shipping from enemy suicide planes.

48. Attacks on enemy shipping during the two-day period resulted in the sinking of four medium cargo ships and two medium oilers, damage to another oiler, and destruction of numerous smaller craft.

49. The cost to Task Force 38 in giving this protection to SEVENTH Fleet shipping was heavier on January 7th than on any day in the preceding two months. A total of 28 planes was lost, of which 18 were the result of operational causes. The weather in the operating area contributed to the severity of these operational losses, and made rescue of aircraft personnel difficult. An aggregate of 25 pilots and aircrewmembers were lost on the 7th.

50. Despite the proximity of enemy air bases, destroyers were fueled from heavy ships for three hours during the middle of the day. At 2100 the force took course toward a point approximately 160 miles east of the northern tip of LUZON, where fueling from oilers was scheduled to take place. Fueling exercises were carried out on the 8th, after which the force again proceeded toward FORMOSA.

51. January 9th was S-Day for the amphibious landings which were scheduled to occur at LINGAYEN Gulf. The southern FORMOSA fields were within 400 miles of the landing beaches, and as a consequence, aircraft based there constituted a distinct threat to the amphibious operations. These fields were out of range of Southwest Pacific land-based aircraft, and Commander THIRD Fleet considered a carrier aircraft attack there preferable to direct support in the LINGAYEN Region.

52. From a point slightly over 100 miles off the nearest part of the FORMOSA coast, a pre-dawn launch was sent off under the continuing adverse weather conditions. Distances to objectives varied from 140 miles to the nearer southern FORMOSA airfields to over 350 miles to OKINAWA.

53. The sweeps launched from Task Group 38.3 ran into heavy frontal weather before reaching their objectives -- SAKISHIMA GUNTO and OKINAWA. At SAKISHIMA GUNTO, while the planes reached the target area, the weather prevented location of enemy airfields. The OKINAWA mission was turned back, when in an attempt to climb over the front, severe icing conditions developed. Later in the day, two strikes from this group succeeded in reaching FORMOSA, and another got through to MIYAKO JIMA.

54. Three strikes from each of the CVs, and one from the CVLs of Task Group 38.1, were able to penetrate the weather to attack FORMOSA targets. Strikes from

S E C R E T

Task Group 38.2 covered the same objectives at FORMOSA and the PESCADORES Islands as they had been assigned on the prior strikes on 3-4 January.

55. Considering the conditions under which the missions were flown, results in terms of enemy shipping sunk were good. Nine ships were sunk, including 3 DE and 2 large AO; and 19 ships were damaged (including 5 large AO, 1 large AK, 3 DE and 3 PC). Enemy aircraft losses totalled 47; 5 in the air and 42 on the ground. Our own losses, despite the weather, were not excessive, being only 9 planes; all but three of which were from operational causes. While the task force attacks were limited by weather, this same factor undoubtedly affected similarly the enemy air effort against both THIRD and SEVENTH Fleet forces. No enemy planes approached Task Force 38, and air opposition on S-Day at LINGAYEN Gulf was not reported to be heavy.

Operations in the South CHINA Sea 10-19 January.

56. Introduction - - The penetration of the South CHINA Sea by the Fast Carrier Task Force was an event of outstanding significance, since it was the first time that Japanese control of these waters, established in the early days of the war, had been challenged by our surface forces.

57. This sea is a large body of water with considerable land masses on all sides. From FORMOSA on the north, to BORNEO and the MALAY Peninsula on the south, the distance is approximately 1200 miles. It is approximately 600 miles from the eastern boundary formed by LUZON, MINDORO, PALAWAN, and BORNEO, to the western CHINA-INDO-CHINA-MALAY Peninsula shore. A number of good harbors exist along the western shoreline. Among these from south to north are SINGAPORE, SAIGON, CAMRANH Bay, HONGKONG, and SWATOW. From these ports, and from the oil ports of the NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES, Japanese convoy routes had heretofore passed through the South CHINA Sea relatively free from attack except by submarine. The enclosed waters formed a vital link in the supply line between the EMPIRE and the conquered territory to the south.

58. To enter or leave the restricted waters of this region, THIRD Fleet forces were compelled to choose between the passages separating FORMOSA and LUZON to the north, and the southern routes through the inland waters of the PHILIPPINES via SAN BERNARDINO or SURIGAO Straits. In either event, a close approach to enemy held territory was unavoidable.

59. Another difficulty which was anticipated in penetrating the South CHINA Sea during January was bad weather. Forecasts indicated that the weather might be adverse both from a sea and flying standpoint, as the South CHINA Sea in this season is subject to frequent typhoons. Operations under these conditions presented considerable hazard, in view of the distance to our nearest bases.

60. Surrounding the South CHINA Sea were a large number of enemy air bases, so placed that a U. S. task force could be both searched out and attacked at almost any part of this enclosed region. While the relative importance and location of these fields was known in general, detailed target information, both on airfields and other target areas in the CHINA-INDO CHINA Region, was incomplete. The enemy air strength estimated to be present in the FORMOSA-LUZON Area has already been mentioned. Elsewhere the following numbers of operational enemy aircraft were estimated to be present: - NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES - 280; South INDO-CHINA-BURMA and THAILAND - 170; CHINA, HAINAN-NORTH INDO-CHINA - 500; - Total 950. For the most part, these planes were Japanese Army aircraft, and probably less effective against U. S. naval forces than would be the enemy's naval air arm.

S E C R E T

61. As has been indicated, it was anticipated that substantial enemy naval strength would be located in the South CHINA Sea, including the two BB-XCV ISE and HYUGA. In addition, concentrations of merchant tonnage at the principal ports and in convoys along the western coastline were expected to offer valuable targets for attacks.

62. An entry by THIRD Fleet forces into the South CHINA Sea would have the effect of placing them in a covering position to protect our LINGAYEN forces, and if the enemy naval strength in the south could be located and destroyed, it would eliminate the threat which these forces constituted to SEVENTH Fleet ship traffic passing from LEYTE to the west coast of LUZON. Not less important from a strategic standpoint was the psychological effect which such a penetration would have on both the Japanese and upon our Chinese allies. Operations with impunity by U. S. naval forces in an area which theretofore constituted a vital Japanese supply route, and attacks on a region where Japanese supremacy had previously gone largely unchallenged, might bring home to the enemy more fully the tenuous hold he had on this route and this area. The possibility that amphibious landings might ultimately follow in the wake of our carrier raids could not but be a heartening prospect for the Chinese.

63. In the light of these circumstances, and on completion of the FORMOSA strikes of 9 January, plans which had previously been prepared and disseminated by Commander THIRD Fleet were ordered executed.

64. On the night of 9-10 January, THIRD Fleet forces at high speed made the westward passage through LUZON Strait. Task Force 38 employed BASHI Channel near FORMOSA, while the fast oiler group, Task Group 30.8, came through BALINTANG Channel to the southward. Despite the fact that for 16 hours these forces, spread out over 30 miles of ocean, were within 100 miles of the southern coast of FORMOSA or northern LUZON, they were neither discovered nor attacked by the enemy. During the night, an INDEPENDENCE night fighter shot down three unsuspecting planes flying from LUZON to FORMOSA.

65. From the morning of the 10th until early on the morning of the 12th, Task Force 38 and the fast oilers proceeded on a southwesterly heading. Fueling was completed on the 11th while proceeding down wind. Long range searches were sent out to a distance of 420 miles on both days, and combat air patrols were flown. For the most part the searches proved negative, pilots having been instructed to avoid detection. Sorties totalled 367 on the 10th, and 319 on the 11th. From the time LUZON Strait was passed until the morning of the 12th, five enemy planes were engaged by our searches and air patrols. Eleven were destroyed before the force was discovered, and none of our aircraft was lost. Both flying and fueling were made difficult on these two days because of the adverse weather conditions which continued to prevail.

66. Upon completion of fueling shortly after noon on the 11th, Task Group 38.2 (including Task Group 38.5, the Night Carrier Group) was detached and sent ahead toward the INDO-CHINA Coast at high speed; the combat air patrol for Task Group 38.2 being provided by the other two task groups. The battle plan, based on the expectation of finding major enemy fleet units in the vicinity of CAMRANH Bay, called for a high speed run by Task Group 38.2 (reinforced by two CA and a destroyer division), a pre-dawn search of the INDO CHINA Coast by Task Group 38.5 planes to locate the enemy, and a joint destruction of enemy forces by the gunfire of Task Group 34.5 and the air power of Task Force 38.

S E C R E T

67. Operations on 12 January - - The searches sent out by the night task group were successful in locating enemy shipping of minor types, but not ISE and HYUGA. A similar situation obtained in the case of the long range day searches which followed. The gunnery ships of Task Group 34.5 arrived at a position 60 miles south of CAMRANH Bay by 0800, but finding no worthwhile targets, rejoined Task Force 38 later in the day.

68. As the force proceeded northward on the 12th from a latitude slightly south of CAMRANH Bay, its track was 60-90 miles off the INDO-CHINA Coast. The strikes which were launched hit objectives as much as 420 miles apart. These included not only several convoys, but also air fields and shore installations, from SAIGON in the south to TOURANE in the north.

69. The fact that these strikes came as a complete surprise to the enemy is indicated not only by the presence of the enemy convoys at sea, but also by the fact that an early morning sweep by YORKTOWN fighter planes shot down 11 airborne enemy aircraft which were on a training mission, and whose only efforts seemed to be evasion and not interception.

70. Fighter sweeps blanketed enemy airfields from SAIGON to QUINHON. Little air opposition was experienced, only 14 enemy airborne planes being engaged, all of which were destroyed without loss to us. Indicative of the effectiveness of the F6F is the fact that 11 of the 14 enemy planes destroyed by Hellcats were attacked by the latter while carrying standard belly tanks, and in some cases a bomb or rockets in addition. Enemy planes destroyed on the ground on the 12th totalled 97.

71. One unfortunate loss occurred at 1850, when three F4U of the combat air patrol made contact with a B-24. The pilots had been vectored out on a "bogey", since the plane was on a closing course and was showing no IFF. The F4U pilots observed no identifying insignia on the plane, and while flying abeam of the Liberator attempting to identify themselves, were fired on by its crew. Believing it to be enemy despite its type, the F4U pilots attacked, flaming the port wing root. An explosion followed, and the B-24 disappeared in a diving turn into the undercast.

72. Although poor weather handicapped the shipping attacks, particularly off QUINHON, the overall results for the day's operations were among the most successful of the war to date. Forty ships were sunk, including the dismantled French cruiser LAMOTTE-PIQUET, the Japanese training light cruiser KASHII, 9 DE, 4 PC, 4 large oilers, and 3 large freighters. Total tonnage sunk was estimated at 127,000 tons. Twenty-two other freighters and oilers displacing 70,000 tons were damaged. The principal convoys were found off Cape PADARAN, off QUINHON, at Cape ST. JACQUES, in the SAIGON River, and in CAMRANH Bay. Of the damaged ships, a considerable number were left beached along the coast, where it is believed they were further damaged or sunk by a typhoon which occurred in this general area during the next few days.

73. The total losses sustained by Task Force 38 on the 12th, in attaining these objectives and causing considerable damage to enemy ground installations, was 23 planes.

74. The following information taken from the report of ComAirPac covering the operations from 10-13 January summarizes the effort put forth. Offensive

S E C R E T

effort, as compared to defensive effort, is reflected to some extent by figures on purposes for which sorties were flown. In this connection, sorties on the four days 10-13 January totalled 2267, of which 865 or 38% were strike or sweep sorties, the balance being defensive. On the 12th, 100 strike or sweep sorties were flown for every 70 non-strike sorties. The 1457 sorties which took off on the 12th were made by 865 available aircraft. This average of 1.7 sorties per plane for the day indicates the high utilization made of planes and personnel.

75. With over 90% of the bombs dropped being directed against shipping targets, tonnages expended on the 12th were nearly three times the daily total normally dropped where "blanketing" tactics over airfields are employed. With respect to the effectiveness of bombing and torpedo attacks, compared to similar attacks during the past year, the following figures are significant:

	<u>Ships Sunk</u>	<u>Bombing and Torpedo Sorties per Ship Sunk</u>	<u>Tonnage of Bombs and Torpedoes per Ship Sunk</u>
INDO CHINA 12 January	40	12	7½
MANILA 21-22 September	34	12	8½
PALAU 30-31 March	25	18	12
TRUK 17-18 February	20	30	20

76. The following statement, taken from the report of Commander Task Group 38.2 as to bombing accuracy, indicates an unusual turn of events which occurred during the attacks on shipping. "During an attack on an enemy DE by planes of this group on 12 January, the results of a coordinated attack were somewhat unexpected. Strafing set several good fires. The bombers followed the strafers, and while their near misses caused some damage to the DE, the splashes put out the fires. After this had happened four times, it was decided that the bombing of DEs when already afire was an unprofitable pastime."

77. Attacks on FORMOSA-HONGKONG-HAINAN Area 15-16 January - - On completion of the attacks on shipping on 12 January, retirement to the northeast to a fueling rendezvous on the 13th was made at high speed, both to avoid enemy searches, and to escape a typhoon to the south. While the typhoon center was avoided, weather and sea conditions were such as to slow fueling on the 13th, and to require most of the 14th to complete. The fuel required took all that was left in the task group of fast oilers that had come through the LUZON Strait the night of 9-10 January. Despite the heavy weather, no ships were rendered inoperational. On completion of fueling, the force proceeded toward the next day's launching position.

78. From positions 215-260 miles bearing 110° from HONGKONG, and 155-170 miles bearing 70° from TAKAO, FORMOSA, strikes were launched on the morning of 15 January. Weather remained adverse during the morning, both at the force and over the principal targets, HONGKONG and FORMOSA, where low ceilings prevailed.

79. The task groups were assigned not only the FORMOSA regions which they had covered in prior strikes, but also were to search and attack CHINA Coast targets, ranging from AMOY in the north, through the SWATOW region to HONGKONG and CANTON on the south. One task group attacked targets separated by over 450 miles (northern FORMOSA and CANTON).

80. Both aircraft and shipping targets proved scarce at the CHINA coast objectives. Due to deteriorating weather, attacks on these targets had to be discontinued by noon-time, but a fighter blanket was attempted over FORMOSA.

S E C R E T

81. A considerable number of valuable shipping targets were found at TAKAO and TOSHIEN Harbor, FORMOSA, and attacks were pressed home on these until bad weather required strikes to be diverted to MAKO KO in the PESCADORES. The results of the day's operations can be summarized as follows:

<u>Ships Sunk:</u>	- 6 (including 1 DD and 3 large AO) (exclusive of luggers and barges.)
<u>Ships Damaged:</u>	- 8
<u>Enemy Planes Destroyed:</u>	in the air, 16; on the ground, 18: Total: - 34.
<u>Own Losses:</u>	- 8 aircraft in combat; 4 operationally.

82. In addition to the damage to shipping, considerable damage to ground targets, such as drydocks and locomotives, was effected. One mission by ENTERPRISE aircraft to PRATAS Reef destroyed a radio station and other installations, and discovered an airfield whose existence had not previously been known.

83. During the night, the force proceeded southwest in order to be in position to strike HONGKONG, CANTON, and HAINAN Island on the next day.

84. HAINAN Island targets were assigned to Task Group 38.3. Distances to the target from the launching position varied from 250 to 290 miles. As a result, it was only possible to send two strikes and two fighter sweeps to this area. Targets were not as good or as plentiful as had been anticipated. Six airborne enemy planes were destroyed, and a few were burned on the ground. Damaging hits were scored on four large freighters at YULIN Harbor, sinking two of them. As a result of slow rendezvous, faulty navigation, bad weather, and the distance to the target, four of our planes were compelled to make water landings. The crews of all except one were rescued.

85. The other two task groups sent fighter sweeps to cover the coastal airfields from the LUICHOW Peninsula to SWATOW. Again enemy aircraft were noticeable by their absence, only a few being engaged or destroyed. One enemy transport, heavily escorted, was among those destroyed.

86. The brunt of the assault was sent against HONGKONG, where 138 of our aircraft attacked in three groups in the morning, and another 158 in three groups in the afternoon. There were approximately 25 worthwhile ships located in HONGKONG Harbor and these, with other ships in the TAIKOO shipyards, the nearby oil storage tanks, dockyards, and wharves, constituted the principal targets. The six strikes which were launched during the day met some of the most intense anti-aircraft fire ever experienced in prior carrier operations, one report describing it as varying "from intense to unbelievable". Enemy fire control and accuracy also appear to have been exceptionally good, particularly on the first attack of the afternoon, when one out of every eight planes attacking ships was lost. We suffered a total loss of 17 of our planes in the HONGKONG attacks. The damage to the enemy was not as great as might have been hoped; one large freighter was sunk and 15-17 other ships were damaged.

87. Long range searches which had been sent out during the two day period were generally unproductive, although large parts of the CHINA Sea were covered.

88. For the two days of operation, (15-16 January) the results obtained, aside from damage to ground installations, were as follows:

S E C R E T

Enemy Planes Destroyed: - In the air, 26; on the ground, 21: Total 47.
Enemy Ships Sunk: - 12; damaged; 27 (excluding luggers and barges).
Own Losses: - Aircraft: in combat, 30; operationally, 31: Total: 61.
 Pilots: 28; aircrewmembers: 20.

The two days operation was one of the few in recent months when our own aircraft losses exceeded those of the enemy.

89. Withdrawal from the South CHINA Sea - - For three days following the strikes on the HONGKONG Area, the operations of the force were limited by very heavy seas and poor flying conditions. Attempts to fuel were made on the 17th and 18th, with little success. After a run to the southward, a reasonably calm sea was found in the lee of LUZON, and fueling operations were successfully completed.

90. During the 10 day period following the entry of THIRD Fleet forces into the South CHINA Sea, Japanese reports had spoken of having "bottled up" our fleet in that area, and had broadcast dire threats of what would occur to the fleet as it attempted to withdraw. While a withdrawal through SURIGAO Strait had the advantage of sheltered waters, permitting fueling and passage on a fixed schedule, it was almost certain that the force would be detected if that route were used. Despite the disadvantage of unpredictable weather in the LUZON Passage, that Strait afforded a better chance of sortie without detection, and was more desirable strategically. Orders were accordingly issued on the 19th by Commander THIRD Fleet, for Task Force 38 to proceed north with a view to leaving the CHINA Sea by the LUZON Strait on the night of the 20th-21st.

91. To prevent detection of the force, searches which had obtained special weather data in LUZON Strait in the morning were purposely omitted on the afternoon of the 20th, and late in the afternoon the task force was heading east near BALINTANG Channel, with the three task groups in column, and a destroyer division sweeping ahead. After 1610, bogeys were almost constantly on the screen, some on southerly courses and some heading north, but no attack developed. The force was apparently on the air ferry lane between LUZON and FORMOSA, and a total of 14 enemy planes, mostly transports, was shot down. By 2300, Task Force 38 had transited the passage, and was proceeding to a position from which to attack FORMOSA the next day.

Attacks on FORMOSA 21 January.

92. Offensive Operations - - The first strike against FORMOSA targets was launched at 0650 (40 minutes before sunrise), from a point approximately 120 miles east of TAKAO, FORMOSA. Strikes were launched regularly throughout the day, with emphasis during the morning on shipping targets, and in the afternoon on airfields. During the day, a total of 1164 sorties of all types were reported to have been flown. Attack sorties were made as follows:

Target	Sorties						Tons of Bombs	Losses to Enemy Action
	Total	Bomb	Rocket	Strafe	VSB	VTB		
Shipping	195	111	86	122	74	133	213	5
Airfields	236	107	100	203	12	28	63	4
Harbor Installations	<u>15</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>..</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>:</u>
Total.	446	225	198	336	86	164	279	9

S E C R E T

93. Contacts with enemy airborne aircraft over the target were extremely few, only three enemy planes being engaged at FORMOSA during the day, despite the fact that nearly 700 sorties by our aircraft were over the general target area in that period. On the airfields of FORMOSA, the PESCADORES, SAKASHIMA GUNTO, and OKINAWA, a substantial number of grounded planes were found, and the day's total of destruction of these (104) was the highest achieved by the force during January.

94. Aided by the first good flying conditions of the month, attacks on shipping targets were pressed with determination. Despite intense anti-aircraft fire, shipping in TAKAO, TOSHIEN, and KEELUNG were heavily hit. Because of the shallowness of the water in TAKAO Harbor, it was difficult to distinguish between the damaged ships resting on the bottom, and others which were still serviceable, but at the end of the day, the condition of TAKAO Harbor was reminiscent of MANILA Harbor a few months earlier. The total damage to shipping in these attacks was estimated as:

Sunk: - 9 ships (all large and medium oilers and freighters).
Damaged: - 11 ships (including two destroyers, and the balance large and medium oilers and freighters).

Estimated Tonnage was:

Sunk: - 53,100 tons.
Damaged: - 61,000 tons.

95. Defensive Operations - - The 21st of January was the first day since November when any serious enemy air attacks were made on ships of the fast carrier task force. The attacks on that date met with considerable success, and resulted in serious damage to TICONDEROGA (CV) as well as minor damage to LANGLEY (CVL) and MADDOX (DD).

96. Certain conditions which existed on the 21st were unusually favorable for successful enemy attack. During the previous night, while transiting LUZON Strait, the force was very probably detected by one or more of the numerous enemy planes in the area. Between 0800 and 0900 on the morning of the 21st, at least three enemy planes approached the task force, and probably were again able to report its position. On the night of the 20th, priorities for attack were shifted, so that enemy shipping, rather than his aircraft, were made the primary target for our aircraft. On the morning of the 21st, flying weather (which undoubtedly had contributed to the enemy's inability to launch attacks at other times during the month), was good. A directive was also issued by Commander THIRD Fleet to use every opportunity to top off destroyers during the day, which necessarily limited maneuverability of the ships involved.

97. At 1200, the force was approximately 100 miles east of the southern coast of FORMOSA. The distance between Task Group 38.1 on the south, and Task Group 38.2 in the center, was approximately 12 miles, while Task Group 38.3 was farther to the north. The latter group was fueling four destroyers from two battleships at a speed of 16 knots, and not zigzagging. Shortly before this, a possible bogey contact at 64 miles to the west had been reported, but could not be confirmed. There were many friendly planes returning at the time, and identification was difficult. As a precaution, however, a division of fighters was vectored to intercept, and gun crews were alerted. No "tallyho" was effected, and at 1206 a single engined enemy plane glided out of the sun and dropped two small bombs, one of which struck

S E C R E T

LANGLEY on the forward part of the flight deck. Within two minutes after this explosion, another enemy plane, also undetected until the last minute, glided out of the clouds and crashed through the forward part of TICONDEROGA's flight deck, starting heavy fires among planes on the hangar deck.

98. With fires raging on TICONDEROGA, Task Group 38.3 was maneuvered around her, in order to give close support while she adopted the most advantageous course for fighting her fire. These maneuvers separated this task group from the other two.

99. At about 1230, a sizeable raid of other Japanese planes was reported to be approaching Task Group 38.1 to the south. The direction of the approach of this raid indicated that it was coming from the BABUYAN Islands north of LUZON. Two divisions of COWPENS fighters were vectored out, and succeeded in intercepting 18 enemy fighters. The eight COWPENS planes attacked at once and destroyed 14 of the enemy, probably destroying three others. In any event, no attack on ships of the force developed from these enemy planes.

100. At about this time, more enemy planes approached Task Group 38.3 from the direction of FORMOSA. Most of these were intercepted, and five enemy fighters and one Judy were shot down, two others escaping. At 1251 a plane gliding in toward TICONDEROGA without radar warning was shot down by anti-aircraft fire, but four minutes later, again without previous radar warning, a second plane crashed into TICONDEROGA's island structure, adding to her damage. Two BALTIMORE OS2Us which approached Task Group 38.3 at this time were shot down by friendly anti-aircraft fire, but their personnel were rescued.

101. At 1310, MADDOX, which was then on strike picket duty 35 miles toward FORMOSA, was hit and lightly damaged by a suicide plane. When first observed, this plane appeared to be near some friendly F6Fs, gave no "bogey" indications, and as a result, its attack came as a surprise.

102. This ended successful enemy attacks for the day, though a few more bogeys were "splashed" before the force withdrew. It did not, however, end damage to our ships. At 1328, HANCOCK in Task Group 38.2 was recovering aircraft when a VT which had apparently made a normal landing taxied forward on the flight deck. As the plane reached the island structure one, and possibly two, 500-pound bombs fell from the bomb-bay and exploded on the flight deck. Heavy fires started at once on the flight, gallery, and hangar decks.

103. The ship damage and casualties which resulted from the day's events were as follows:

	<u>MADDOX</u>	<u>LANGLEY</u>	<u>HANCOCK</u>	<u>TICONDEROGA</u>
Killed or Missing	7	3	50	143
Wounded	33	33	75	202
Damage	Starboard side penetrated. Not serious.	Flight deck holed - not serious.	Flight, and hangar deck burned in part. Moderately serious.	Flight, gallery and hangar decks, and island area badly damaged. 36 planes lost.

Both LANGLEY and HANCOCK rapidly controlled their fires, and both ships were able to recover aircraft by 1530. TICONDEROGA, however, while successful in controlling

S E C R E T

fires, was unable to continue operations with the force, and with MADDOX had to be returned to ULITHI.

NANSEI SHOTO Strike 22 January.

104. The primary objective for the strikes on 22 January over the NANSEI SHOTO was to obtain photographic coverage, in anticipation of subsequent landing operations there. Allocation of target areas included SAKISHIMA GUNTO, IE SHIMA, TOKUNO SHIMA, and KIKAI SHIMA in the AMAMI Group, as well as OKINAWA.

105. A total of 682 sorties was flown, of which 47 were photographic. No airborne enemy aircraft were engaged, but 28 were found and destroyed on the ground. Considerable damage was also inflicted on ground installations.

106. A few enemy ships were found at NAHA, IE SHIMA and MIYAKO, and three medium and one small ships were sunk. Three others were damaged.

107. While unfavorable weather interfered with some of the photographic missions, pilots were able to obtain coverage of over 80% of the number one priority areas, and a majority of the desired coverage of other areas. In one case, a photographic team of four planes flying abreast successfully covered YONTAN airstrip with one pass, thereby saving repeated runs by individual planes, over this heavily defended region. The operation was the first occasion on which a six-man photographic team was used.

108. With the completion of the NANSEI SHOTO strikes, the force returned to ULITHI, having completed almost a full month continuously at sea, largely in waters hitherto considered to be controlled by the enemy.

Night Operations During January.

109. January was the first month during which one of the large carriers was utilized for night operations. As pointed out above, ENTERPRISE and INDEPENDENCE, with a screen of six destroyers, operated frequently as an independent group (Task Group 38.5) at night, and during daylight hours would merge with Task Group 38.2, and come under the protective screen and tactical command of Commander Task Group 38.2.

110. The routine operations thus developed for a night carrier group comprise the following:

- (a) Force CAP - - Keeping VF(N) aircraft airborne or in Condition 11 at all times for protection of the force from dusk, night, and dawn attack.
- (b) Target CAP - - Keeping VF(N) aircraft over target areas to permit unmolested withdrawal of our force. The flight of VF(N) which takes over from the final day CAP to enable them to land in daylight, bridges the gap until the "hecklers" take over at night, and has become known as the "Zipper" flight.
- (c) "Hecklers" - - Either VF(N) or VT(N), with or without rockets and bombs, which cruise over the enemy's fields, and prevent the organization of counter-attack flights, or the moving in or out of enemy aircraft.
- (d) Night Search - - VT(N) aircraft with half-bomb-bay tanks, which search the sea approaches to enemy harbors for enemy naval or

S E C R E T

shipping targets on the night preceding a daytime attack. These may be used for regular search missions on zero-visibility days.

111. In carrying out these missions, 431 sorties were flown, of which strikes, sweeps and "heckler" missions totalled 183, and searches 74; the balance being defensive patrols. Pilots from these two night carriers destroyed 29 enemy aircraft, while losing 21 of their own planes. Most of our losses came as a result of operational causes, a condition which might be expected, considering the adverse weather conditions encountered, and the comparative newness of night operations.

Operations of THIRD Fleet Service Groups.

112. Operations in the CHINA Sea by the Fast Carrier Task Force required logistic support at more than the usual distance. They likewise required the lightly screened oilers and CVEs to accompany the force into these restricted waters. Throughout the month, the necessary fuel and aircraft replacements were supplied as required. The only notable enemy contact by the logistic groups occurred on 12 January, when a Jake approached the fueling group while it was operating independently in the South CHINA Sea. A section of NEHENTA BAY FM-2 aircraft succeeded in shooting it down.

113. Two minor collisions occurred during the period. The first of these, on 3 January, was between ROBERT F. KELLER (DE) and SARGENT BAY (CVE), while the destroyer escort was in the course of mail delivery exercises. Damage to both ships was minor, though ROBERT F. KELLER returned to ULITHI for repairs. The second collision was between GUADALUPE (AO) and NANTAHALA (AO) at 0102 on the morning of 10 January, while both ships were transiting LUZON Strait. Again damage was minor, and both ships continued with scheduled operations. Storm damage was incurred on 17 January from waves crashing over the flight deck of NEHENTA BAY (CVE). The forward part of the ship's flight deck was bent downward, resting on the forecastle. Navy yard availability was required.

114. Throughout the month's operations, Task Group 30.7 (commanded by Captain G. C. Montgomery in ANZIO with screen) acted as an anti-submarine group in support of the fueling groups en route to rendezvous with Task Force 38, and during the periods of fueling. There were no definite submarine contacts by this group during the month.

115. Within the CHINA Sea, Commander Task Group 30.8 (Captain J. T. Acuff) furnished six fast oilers and two CVEs with destroyer screen. These satisfactorily met the logistic requirements of the carrier force. Destroyer escorts rather than destroyers were used for other service units while outside the CHINA Sea.

Summary.

116. Results of January Operations - - The results of the operations of THIRD Fleet forces during January can not be measured alone in the tangible damage inflicted on Japanese ships, planes and shore installations, substantial as that was. Like the first attack on TRUK in February 1943, and the first assault on large land masses in the PHILIPPINES in September 1944, the penetration beyond the islands off the Asiatic mainland to strike at CHINA coast targets had considerable strategic significance. From this time onward, no area outside of the immediate Japanese homeland and northern CHINA was safe from assault by our carrier force, and even JAPAN itself was to feel the weight of carrier raids during the next month. THIRD Fleet forces had traversed 3800 miles during the 10 days in the CHINA Sea

S E C R E T

without battle damage; and the weakness of enemy air reaction had shown the entire region to be wide open for future attack.

117. From the standpoint of material losses suffered by our forces and the Japanese through the month's operations of THIRD Fleet, the following summary taken from the report of Commander Task Force 38 shows these results:

Japanese ships sunk (excluding small craft)	91	(293,900 tons)
Japanese ships damaged (excluding small craft)	<u>99</u>	(323,100 tons)
Total	190	(617,000 tons)
Japanese aircraft destroyed in the air	149	
Japanese aircraft destroyed on the ground	<u>466</u>	
Total	615	
U. S. ships sunk	0	
U. S. ships damaged	4	(TICONDEROGA and HANCOCK (CVs) LANGLEY (CVL), and MADDOX (DD)).
U. S. aircraft losses:	In combat	98 Operationally 103.
U. S. pilots and aircrewmembers lost:	In combat	136 Operationally 31.

118. Particularly notable in the figures presented above are the results of shipping strikes; January ship tonnage destroyed being one of the highest yet attained by carrier forces.

119. Effect of Weather - - An important feature of the month's operations was proof of the ability of the ships and personnel of the fleet to carry on effectively despite almost continuous bad weather. While some ships, particularly the smaller ones, received damage from the high seas, none of the weather encountered prevented continued operations. Operations by destroyers (particularly those on strike picket or "tomcat" duties, which occasionally were compelled to rejoin a retiring force at high speed) were difficult. As for carrier operations, availability of aircraft was kept at a reasonably high level despite the heavy weather. The report from LANGLEY states in this connection: "Maintenance problems were particularly difficult throughout this operation, due mainly to the limitations imposed by weather conditions. Making an engine change, changing a wing or landing gear, etc., is impossible with the ship rolling and pitching as heavily as it did (over 35° at times) and more work of this nature was encountered, due to the difficulties and minor crashes involved while attempting to land on an elusive deck. Another problem encountered was that of having the night ready deck duty during periods of heavy weather. With all planes spotted forward and water breaking over the flight deck sometimes as high as the bridge structure, the pounding the aircraft took is obvious."

120. Flying conditions for pilots for the most part were undesirable, ability to use instruments and navigate being at a premium. The resultant strain on pilots was pronounced. As one task group commander states in his report, "During the extensive operations covered by this report, our pilots flew in weather that I do not believe any other pilots in the world could have operated in, and in spite of this weather inflicted an amazing amount of damage on the enemy."

S E C R E T

121. Carrier Trends - - Statistics prepared by ComAirPac in his Analysis of Carrier Air Operations for the month of January indicated a number of significant trends in recent operations. Among these are the following:

(1) That although the average complement of planes aboard our carriers has increased by reason of the increase in number of fighters per carrier, the average total of sorties attacking targets on strike days has substantially decreased. For example, in June off the MARIANAS, with an initial complement of 905 carrier aircraft, the number attacking targets per day averaged 929; whereas in January, with an initial complement of 942, only 565 attacked targets on an average strike day.

(2) The average tonnage of bombs dropped on targets per day has decreased, both in total, and in tons per plane of complement. For example:

<u>Periods of Operation</u> <u>(Daily Averages)</u>	<u>Force Complement</u>				<u>Tons on Tons per Plane</u>	
	<u>VF</u>	<u>VSB</u>	<u>VTB</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>of Complement</u>
12-15 June 1944 (4 days)	424	199	176	799	320	.40
9-24 Sept. 1944 (8 days)	382	180	146	708	241	.34
3-22 Jan. 1945 (10 days)	671	72	166	909	180	.20

122. Among the factors which have contributed to this changed condition were: the increase in defensive use of aircraft occasioned by enemy suicide tactics; the increase in fighter types at the expense of bombers; the unfavorable weather conditions experienced in January as compared to June; and the use of night carriers, which necessarily provided fewer sorties per 24 hour period than would be the case with day groups.

123. A number of the action reports covering the operations of the fast carriers and their aircraft during January commented on the performance of fighter aircraft as bombers. Certain conditions existed in January which militated against a high performance by these planes as bombers. Among these were the recent rapid expansion of VF squadrons with pilots whose training had been primarily as fighters and not as bombers; the intense anti-aircraft fire which met many of the bombing strikes during the month; and the more than usual pilot fatigue engendered by the sustained operations under the prevailing adverse weather conditions. The following figures prepared by ComAirPac, covering the sorties attacking targets in the period from 3-9 January, illustrate the difference in bomb weight and number carried by various types of carrier aircraft as used in this period.

<u>Type</u>	<u>Attack</u> <u>Sorties</u>	<u>Bombs Expended</u>		<u>Bombs per</u> <u>Sortie</u>	<u>Tons per</u> <u>Sortie</u>	<u>Rockets per</u> <u>Sortie</u>
		<u>Number</u>	<u>Tons</u>			
VF	1720	742	219	.43 #	.13 #	2.0
VBS	221	598	132	2.7	.60	. .
VTB	520	3966 *	349	7.6 *	.67	.2

* Counting each cluster as one bomb only; assuming all frag clusters were M1A1, and all incendiary clusters M-6, VTB dropped 7770 bombs total, including individual frags and incendiaries, or an average of 15. per sortie.

One bomb, and .3 ton, per VF sortie dropping bombs.

The figures are significant in showing the relatively small bomb loads delivered to target by VF as employed and loaded. They also indicate the ability of VSB

S E C R E T

and VTB to deliver greater numbers as well as weights of bombs to target. A compilation of the types of bombs carried served to emphasize the variety of types carried by torpedo bombers as compared to fighters.

124. In the attacks on shipping, relative accuracy in hits scored per bomb dropped, indicated that there was not much to choose between the accuracy of fighter bombers and dive bombers. Dive bombers on the average carried two and one half bombs per attack; whereas fighters carried only one bomb. As a result of this greater number, bombers averaged 53 hits per 100 attacks as compared to 17 hits per 100 attacks by fighters.

125. The operations described above were the first in which Marine Corps flyers had operated from carriers of the Fast Carrier Force since December 4, 1941, when SARATOGA delivered 12 F4Fs piloted by Marines for the historic defense of WAKE Island. The F4U aircraft which the Marines flew from carriers in January in general proved adaptable to carrier use, particularly for interceptions, bomber escort, strafing, and rocket attacks. During the month's operations the planes' availability was not quite as high as the F6F. The Marine pilots creditably surmounted the difficulties of adjusting themselves to operations which in many respects were foreign to their prior operational experience. As might have been expected, operational losses of F4Us piloted by Marines proportionally exceeded those of F6Fs piloted by naval flyers more experienced in carrier operations.

B. LAND-BASED AIR OPERATIONS.

(See Plate I)

General.

126. A striking feature of land-based aerial warfare in the Pacific Ocean Areas during January was the small scale of the losses suffered on both sides, as contrasted with the magnitude of the operations. If in losses on both sides B-29 operations are excluded, the enemy lost a total of only 12 aircraft, while our casualties were even slighter: eight planes destroyed in combat. Even though our aircraft made a total of 2650 sorties in all areas and dropped 2823 tons of bombs, enemy airborne opposition was negligible except at IWO JIMA, and was never formidable even there. The result was that few airborne targets were presented for our bombers and fighters to shoot down, and those which did appear found themselves facing such insuperable odds that any efforts at interception were discouraged.

127. Of the 12 Japanese planes destroyed, five were shot down by our fighters at SAIPAN, in the course of raids on our MARIANAS bases, while four of the eight planes we lost in all attacks by land-based aircraft in the Pacific Ocean Areas were shot down in the PALAUS, by flak. An interesting sidelight of operations in the PALAUS was the use of time bombs on Japanese installations and airfields.

Operations of the XXI Bomber Command.

128. The operations of the B-29s of the XXI Bomber Command are included to show their relationship to developments in the Pacific Ocean Areas and to the general strategic situation, although they are not under the command of Cincpac-Cincpoa. Due to the close coordination of this command with air forces of the Central Pacific, its operations are described briefly in this Section.

S-E-C-R-E-T

129. Summary -- In January 1945, B-29s of the XXI Bomber Command dropped 1598 tons of bombs on combat missions and weather strikes, as compared with 1725 tons in December 1944, and 686 tons in November. Twenty-six Superforts were lost during January, as compared to 21 destroyed in December, and five during November. At the same time, 141 enemy interceptors were reported shot down in January, 49 in December, and 7 in November. These figures exclude enemy planes probably destroyed and damaged, while the B-29 losses include both combat losses and missing planes. The ratio of enemy to B-29 losses for the three months was 5.4/1 in January, 2.3/1 in December, and 1.4/1 in November.

130. A total of six missions was flown by XXI Bomber Command B-29s during January - all being daylight missions which bombed from 25,100 to 34,400 feet. A breakdown of bomb totals dropped on various targets since the first mission was flown by planes of the XXI Bomber Command on 28 October 1944, shows that IWO JIMA led with 1155 tons, the TOKYO area had received 796 tons, the MITSUBISHI Aircraft Engine Plant 394, the city of NAGOYA 368, the NAKAJIMA Aircraft Factory, MUSASHINO Plant 345, TRUK Atoll 306, the MITSUBISHI Aircraft Plant 249, the KAWASAKI Aircraft Engine Plant at AKASHI 153, other islands 99, and miscellaneous targets 209 tons.

131. The B-29 Mission of 3 January -- The central area of NAGOYA was the primary target for the first January strike on JAPAN. Fifty-nine Superforts dropped 161 tons on the city with results reported as good to excellent. In addition, 19 B-29s released a total of about 56.75 tons on last resort targets which included OSAKA, SHINGU, and HAMAMATSU.

132. We lost one bomber to Japanese interception, four were "ditched" for unknown reasons, and 21 suffered battle damage. Our personnel casualties were five wounded and 67 missing. For their part, the B-29s claimed 11 enemy aircraft destroyed, 9 probably destroyed, and 15 damaged.

133. The B-29 Mission of 9 January -- The mission of January 9th had for its primary target the MUSASHINO Aircraft Plant. Of the 72 aircraft taking off, 18 bombed the primary target, releasing 42 tons there; one Superfort bombed the last resort target, which was the urban area of TOKYO, with 2.5 tons; and 32 aircraft (including three on a diversionary mission to be described hereafter) released 77.5 tons on targets of opportunity.

134. The majority of the 185 attacks by enemy VF on the bomber formations came after the bombs were away. The fighters were aggressive, but their fire was inaccurate. One fighter, believed out of control, collided with a B-29 already damaged over the primary target, causing the destruction of both. A second bomber was downed by an interceptor, while four others were "ditched" for reasons unknown. In addition to the 67 men missing from these six lost B-29s, four men were slightly wounded. Eleven Superforts suffered battle damage, two from flak, the rest from enemy fighters.

135. Our claims were 14 enemy aircraft destroyed, 3 probably destroyed, and 9 damaged. Of the total bombs dropped on the primary target, 1.19% hit within 1000 feet of the aiming point.

136. Three B-29s were assigned as a diversionary force to turn attention from the main force by the use of "rope", a radar counter-measure, as well as to photograph and bomb OSAKA.

S-E-C-R-E-T

137. Until shortly after starting their climb near OSAKA, the flight was without incident. During the ascent, however, cloud layers were encountered, causing light to moderate icing. When the planes were de-pressurized to dispense the "rope", extreme frosting took place. In the case of each B-29, the "rope" hit and dented the radar dome, causing the radar to cease to function. In addition, OSAKA could not be photographed because of the overcast, and it could not be bombed, since the radar equipment had been rendered inoperative.

138. The B-29 Mission of 14 January - - The MITSUBISHI Aircraft Factory at NAGOYA, JAPAN, was the primary target for the mission of January 14th, in which 40 B-29s released 94 tons of bombs; while other industrial cities of JAPAN, which served as last resort targets in this strike, received 50 tons from 20 bombers. Targets of opportunity were bombed by an additional 12.5 tons released by five B-29s.

139. Approximately 525 attacks, mostly over the target, were made by aggressive Japanese fighters, whose fire was described as the most accurate and intense encountered up to that time. Twenty interceptors were claimed destroyed, 14 probably destroyed, and 31 damaged. Of personnel, eight were wounded and 34 were missing as a result of the "ditching" of four planes for unknown reasons on the return to base, while 23 other bombers were damaged - - 19 by enemy interceptors, four by flak.

140. The B-29 Mission of 19 January - - Of 80 B-29 airborne for the mission of the 19th against the KAWASAKI Aircraft Engine Plant at AKASHI, HONSHU, 64 dropped 160 tons of GPs visually from 26,000 feet, at a cost of 12 planes damaged. None of the bombers was lost, while 5 enemy planes were destroyed, 3 probably destroyed, and 3 damaged. Large fires and explosions were observed in the target area as the planes left the vicinity. Nine other Superforts bombed TOKYO and other targets.

141. The B-29 Mission of 23 January - - The MITSUBISHI Aircraft Engine Works at NAGOYA was the primary target for the B-29 mission of 23 January in which 28 planes dropped 83 tons from 25,000 to 27,200 feet, while the center of the city of NAGOYA (the secondary target) was bombed with 84 tons. Post-strike photographs indicated that no hits were scored on the primary target, though a rebuilt sub-assembly building received near misses. A concentration of 50 hits was visible south of the target in the vicinity of filtration ponds; 50 others were observed four miles southeast of the target at the eastern edge of NAGOYA. The remaining bombs apparently struck in areas where little damage was done. Five other Superforts bombed targets of opportunity with 15 tons.

142. Approximately 270 attacks were made on the bomber formations by enemy interceptors, of which 24 were claimed as destroyed, 24 probably destroyed, and 36 damaged. Our losses consisted of one B-29 lost over the target as a result of enemy interception, and of a second plane which was "ditched" two miles from SAIPAN because of engine trouble. Five crew members were rescued and six were missing from the "ditched" bomber. In addition, 31 Superforts were damaged, involving the death of one man and the wounding of nine others.

143. The B-29 Mission of 27 January - - The sixth large-scale Superfort mission of the month over HONSHU came on 27 January, when 65 B-29s at altitudes of 24,500 to 26,500 feet hit harbor and urban areas of TOKYO with 173 tons of GP and incendiary bombs. Fighter opposition was the fiercest yet encountered by the B-29s in

S-E-C-R-E-T

their strikes against JAPAN's domestic industry and economy. Approximately 1050 attacks were made on our planes from first landfall to 60 miles out from the coast on the way home, with many of these attacks being coordinated. There were some coordinated attacks made by two fighters on single bombers - - one of the VF feinting in from one side, in order to distract attention and provide a diversion, while the second fighter pressed in from the opposite side.

144. Several possibly intentional ramblings and near-ramblings were also reported. Of 62 B-29s over the assigned targets, 30 suffered battle damage, while five were lost as the result of enemy action, a sixth crash-landed at home base, and two more were missing for unknown reasons. On the other hand, the Superforts were reported to have destroyed or damaged 119 Japanese fighters in the air - - 57 destroyed, 21 probably destroyed, and 41 damaged.

145. B-29 Targets of Opportunity in the NANPO SHOTO - - On 27 January, 23 B-29s bombed radio installations on MAUG Island, in the MARIANAS, as a target of opportunity.

146. The following day, a B-29 on a weather strike mission bombed HACHIJO JIMA, in the northern NANPO SHOTO, with six tons by radar from 31,500 feet.

Operations Against IWO JIMA. (937 sorties - 1845 tons).

147. Although IWO JIMA was bombed daily without intermission throughout January by a total of 836 B-24s which rained 1546 tons on the tiny VOLCANO Island bastion, neither the number of sorties nor the bomb tonnage was as great as in the preceding month, when 877 B-24s dropped 1649 tons of bombs. After a three day lull in the succession of attacks during December - - on the 5th, 6th, and 7th - - the unbroken series of bombings that was to end only with the occupation of IWO, began.

148. In the first four days of January, 107 Liberators of the 11th and 30th Army Bomber Groups dropped 211 tons of fragmentation cluster and GP bombs on the island, paying somewhat greater attention to MOTOYAMA Airfield No. 1 than to the center airfield. The only interception in this period was by a single Zeke, which proved unaggressive. Because of the high altitudes from which the Liberators bombed, the anti-aircraft weapons employed against them were uniformly of heavy calibre, varying in volume from meager to intense. This fire was more often accurate than inaccurate., as the score of two bombers sustaining major damage and 22 suffering minor damage attested. The work of the B-24s was augmented on the 3rd, when two B-29s dropped five tons on IWO as a target of opportunity.

149. On 5 January the first of two coordinated assaults by Task Group 94.9 and planes of the 11th and 30th Army Bomber Groups sent 52 B-24s and seven P-38s over the island. Details of this bombing are given in the section of this report dealing with the bombardments of IWO JIMA.

150. In the 18-day interval between the combined strike of January 5th and the next one on the 24th, 398 B-24s flew over IWO JIMA to drop 7700 tons of bombs on the south and center airfields, as well as the dispersal areas between the two. Six Liberators suffered major damage in this same period, 21 received minor damage, eight crew members were wounded, and 11 other men were missing after one of the six planes sustaining major damage was "ditched" enroute to base. Although enemy fighters were frequently picked up on the radar scope below the formations or at

S E C R E T

a distance from them, no interception of the bombers was attempted until January 17th, when the 14 planes bombing the south airfield were attacked by four or five single-engine and one twin-engine fighters, which dropped phosphorous bombs inaccurately. One of these interceptors was shot down. A 10-plane bomber formation on the 18th was also bombed unsuccessfully by a single Zeke employing phosphorous bombs.

151. On 14 January, an abortive B-29 dropped 2.5 tons on the two airfields. In addition to the Liberator raids on IWO JIMA, 12 P-38s took off on the 16th for a fighter sweep in conjunction with a bombing strike. One fighter turned back because of mechanical trouble, and nine others were eventually turned back by the weather. Three B-29s had accompanied the mission as navigational escorts, but the P-38s were unable to maintain contact with them after entering the overcast. The two remaining Lightnings strafed LSMs beached on the east coast of IWO, with unobserved results, receiving intense, inaccurate automatic weapon fire from coastal positions. One of these two P-38s was "ditched" when it ran out of gasoline, but the pilot was rescued.

152. On the 19th, a nine-plane mission ran into three interceptors, consisting of a Zeke, an Oscar, and a Nick. The Zeke destroyed itself by ramming the right wing of one of the B-24s, but also inflicted major damage on the bomber, though the latter succeeded in returning to base. In addition, the Nick was probably destroyed.

153. Early the same day, seven B-24s escorted three PB4Ys on a photographic mission over IWO, one B-24 dropping four 100-pound bombs on the south airfield.

154. On the 22nd, a 20-plane formation was intercepted by four aggressive Zekes, one of which was probably shot down, in addition to a single-engine aircraft damaged on the ground. The first of two B-29 strikes on the 23rd met two to four aggressive Zekes, of which one was damaged; while the interceptors' phosphorous bombs did no damage. A night mission of 23 January found the searchlights on IWO more active and accurate than usual. Six to nine beams held three B-24s for periods from 30 seconds to two minutes, but the AA batteries were apparently not synchronized with the searchlights, since no bombers were hit by the heavy calibre flak thrown up.

155. The second coordinated naval and air force strike on IWO came on the 24th, and, as on the 5th, consisted of B-24s escorted by strafing P-38s with the added bombing strength of 20 B-29s increasing its intensity. Details of this coordinated attack are also related elsewhere.

156. For the remainder of the month, 192 B-24s struck IWO with 371 tons of bombs, at a cost to themselves of two planes damaged to a major degree, one moderately damaged, and 17 damaged to a minor extent. Three officers were seriously wounded, and two enlisted men received lesser injuries in this seven day period. One of two aggressive Zekes intercepting with phosphorous bombs on the 27th were destroyed. The same day, the leader of one squadron in a 19-plane mission was hit by a 75-mm shell just before bombs away, causing him to jettison his load immediately. The remainder of the squadron, following his lead, also pulled their bomb releases, causing the bombs to fall into the water and onto the shore east of MOTOYAMA Airfield No. 1. The same day, January 27th, two B-29s dropped eight tons on IWO as a target of opportunity.

S E C R E T

157. On January 29th, 28 of 33 TINIAN-based B-29s airborne bombed IWO's airfields from 23,000 to 26,000 feet, causing heavy explosions with the 166 tons dropped. Three or four VF intercepted, making air-to-air bomb passes ineffectively. One B-29, however, was damaged by anti-aircraft fire.

158. One of three Zekes attacking a 19-plane formation on the 30th was damaged, and a B-24 sustained damage on January 31st, when phosphorous bombs dropped by four aggressive Zekes exploded close aboard.

Attacks on CHICHI JIMA. (18 sorties - 29 tons).

159. A B-29 returning early from a HONSHU mission on January 9th bombed CHICHI with two tons of GPs, when it returned with most of its bomb load because of an interrupted release over TOKYO. On the 14th, another aborting Superfort dropped 2.5 tons visually on the DAIO SAKI Peninsula on CHICHI JIMA.

160. The first activity by Liberators of the 30th Army Bomber Group on 18 January sent six B-24s to bomb installations on the west shore of the naval base, while two others bombed an undetermined portion of the island from 16,000 to 19,000 feet, together causing several small fires and a large column of black smoke to rise from the naval base area from the 16 tons dropped. Heavy calibre, meager, and inaccurate AA fire met the raiders.

161. A day later, on 19 January, the small-scale operations against CHICHI were brought to a close for the month with a 13-ton bombing of the harbor installations from 15,000 to 16,000 feet by seven B-24s. Large fires were observed in the target area and in the naval warehouse and barracks areas, with smoke visible for 25 miles. The AA was of heavy calibre, moderate, and inaccurate.

Attacks on HAHA JIMA. (30 sorties - 47 tons).

162. In the initial B-24 attack on HAHA JIMA on January 2nd, 12 planes of the 11th Army Bomber Group dropped 11.5 tons of bombs in what was intended to be a shipping mission. Shortage of gasoline, however, forced an alteration of plans, and OKIMURA Town was bombed from 15,000 to 18,000 feet.

163. The next mission against HAHA, on the 18th, found 11 B-24s bombing the same target, OKIMURA Town, from 11,000 to 13,300 feet with 24 tons of bombs, starting four to six medium fires. Two other Liberators bombed the west shore of HIGASHI MINATO and an undetermined portion of the island from 15,100 and 19,000 feet, dropping four tons of bombs.

164. Five B-24s released eight tons on OKIMURA Town from 8000 to 11,500 feet in the last raid of the month on 20 January. Hits were observed on the target, despite the heavy calibre, moderate, and accurate flak which opposed two of the bombers.

Search Reconnaissance and Anti-Shipping Missions. (110 sorties - 0.5 tons)

165. Daily searches were carried out during January by PB4Ys of Fleet Air Wing ONE over IWO JIMA, the BONINS, and northern MARIANAS. At the same time, Venturas of VPBs 150 and 151 alternated in conducting three or four plane reconnaissance missions over WOLEAI Atoll; and MARCUS Island was visited four times during the month by B-24 searchers. YAP, ROTA, and PAGAN were other islands inspected each day to insure that no renaissance of enemy activity there had taken place.

S E C R E T

166. Operations of PB4Ys in the VOLCANOES - - Two of the four PB4Ys of VD-5, photographing results of the combined attack of 5 January on IWO, dropped five "centuries" apiece on the south and center airfields respectively, with no bombs hitting the target. This was the only bombing of IWO by a Liberator of VD-5 during the month.

167. On 24 January, search PB4Ys of VPB-102, sent out to provide anti-snooper coverage between Task Group 94.9 and the target, as well as to give warning of Japanese PT boats and submarine, shot down one Zeke, damaged another, and damaged two merchant ships of 70-100 tons each near IWO JIMA.

168. Two luggers were attacked on 27 January near KITA IWO JIMA by a PB4Y of VPB-102, which dropped two bombs close aboard one, causing it to stop dead in the water. The plane then strafed the two craft for 45 minutes, and the first ship attacked was still wallowing in the swells with no way on when the Liberator departed. No return fire came from either vessel, and no personnel were seen at any time. Damage was assessed as slight.

169. Daylight Attacks by PB4Ys in the BONINS - - On 2 January, a PB4Y of VPB-116 sighted a 4000-ton enemy AK at 30°-10' N., 144°-10' E., 300 miles from TOKYO. As it carried no bombs, the search plane made four heavy strafing runs which left the AK dead in the water and violently aflame. As the PB4Y went into a steep dive in an effort to finish off the enemy, a 20-mm gun on the poop deck of the vessel scored three hits on the plane, one shell exploding on impact with the co-pilot's forehead. Fragments of skull and steel entered the pilot's right cheek, tearing out his right eye. Despite the extent of his injuries, the pilot succeeded in pulling out of the strafing dive, and, with the assistance of the plane captain, who replaced the dead co-pilot, made his way safely back to base. There he made a landing so smooth that a half-filled glass of water on the navigator's table remained unspilled when the Liberator was parked. The AK was assessed as sunk.

170. On 11 January, a PB4Y of VPB-102 attacked six 100-foot craft southwest of HAH A JIMA, scoring no hits with its bombs, but inflicting damage on all of the enemy craft with a concentrated strafing attack. Ten miles to the south, another search Liberator from the same squadron attacked another 100-foot craft with a deck cargo of oil drums. These were set afire, with the result that the ship was destroyed by fire.

171. Two Liberators of VPB-111 seriously damaged a small freighter and a lugger between HAH A and CHICHI JIMA on 13 January.

172. On January 22nd, two small freighters escorted by a DE southeast of CHICHI JIMA were damaged by a PB4Y which left one afire. The next day a 100-ton AK was sunk and a 15-ton motor launch was destroyed by fire when a PB4Y of VPB-118 attacked them off HAH A JIMA.

173. Operations of VMB-612 Against Night Shipping - - The rocket-armed PBJs of VMB-612, based at SAIPAN, after an auspicious beginning in November, had found night shipping targets in the BONINS exceedingly scarce in December. The manifest imminence of an amphibious operation against IWO JIMA had the affect of speeding up enemy efforts at reinforcement of the island in January, and shipping targets for our night searchers became more plentiful as a result. At the end of January, the PBJs of VMB-612 had completed their 57th consecutive night of shipping searches in the BONINS-KAZAN area with a nightly average in excess of three planes.

S E C R E T

174. Mining Operations in the BONINS - - During January, B-24s of the 11th Army Bomber Group on GUAM continued to mine waters in the BONINS, one Liberator being reported missing on the 22nd.

Operations Against Rear and By-Passed Areas.

175. General - - The condition of airfields at ROTA and PAGAN was such as to make further bombing of these islands practically useless in January, and they were hit only by fighter sorties. One hundred twelve of these were made to PAGAN and 135 to ROTA.

176. Of the 20 Venturas visiting PONAPE during January, none carried bombs, and the missions were for purposes of reconnaissance, flown primarily to insure the island's continued neutralization.

177. The pattern of neutralizing and harassing operations against the less-important by-passed enemy islands in the MARSHALLS, PALAUS, Eastern CAROLINES, and various isolated atolls, as established in past months, was generally adhered to in January. Strikes (including those of B-29s) against these targets were as follows:

<u>Target</u>	<u>January Sorties</u>	<u>December Sorties</u>	<u>January Bomb Tonnage</u>	<u>December Bomb Tonnage</u>
MILLE	145	115	59	73
JALUIT	93	169	77	131
WITJE	165	290	74	153
MALOELAP	116	308	59	239
PONAPE	20	77	0	36
NAURU	35	18	24	19
WAKE	10	12	16	13
PALAUS	217	270	107	123
ROTA	135	141	3	40
PAGAN	112	256	3	260
SOROL	25	0	12	0
YAP	322	158	142	66
TRUK	113	6	257	2
WOLEAI	13	19	18	20
MARCUS	11	9	13	9
MAUG *	<u>23</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>0</u>
Totals.....	1555	1848	922	1184

* The sorties against MAUG, in the northern MARIANAS, were by B-29s on a single HONSHU mission, which used the island as a target of opportunity.

178. Attacks on MARCUS - - Four armed-reconnaissance missions comprising 11 B-24 sorties were flown against MARCUS Atoll on the 2nd, 12th, 17th, and 29th of January, dropping a total of 13.5 tons of bombs on the airfield and its installations. The anti-aircraft fire encountered varied from meagre to moderate, and from inaccurate to accurate, but was consistently heavy in calibre. The runways were reported operational at the month's end.

179. Attacks on SOROL - - SOROL Island, directly south of ULITHI, was selected as the target for 25 sorties during January, marking the first time that it had been bombed by our shore-based planes. A total of 12.4 tons of bombs was dropped

S E C R E T

on the radio installations there by the Avengers which made the raid, with fair results.

180. Strikes on YAP - - YAP Atoll was subjected to 322 sorties during January, in which a total of 142.5 tons of bombs was dropped. The chief targets for these aircraft were a suspected submarine sanctuary, the airfield and installations, gun positions, and barges. The cause of the unprecedented operations against possible enemy submarine hideouts was the discovery by an Avenger on January 11th of a submarine close to YAP. Twenty-six bombing and four strafing sorties were made by Corsairs of VMF-121; FGs of VMF-114 flew 34 bombing, six rocket, and two strafing sorties; the Corsairs of VMF-122 ran 34 bombing sorties; Avengers of VMTB-134 flew 38 sorties, divided equally between bombing and rocket sorties; and VMTB-232 added 148 bombing sorties.

181. Operations Against WOLEAI - - WOLEAI Atoll was the objective of three B-24 missions during January, in which eight planes were involved and 14 tons of bombs were dropped. Four unidentified enemy aircraft were observed airborne near the runway, but they failed to approach the bomber formation. The anti-aircraft fire which met the three missions was heavy calibre, meager, and inaccurate. In addition to the B-24 missions, three small Ventura strikes dropped 4.5 tons of bombs on gun emplacements at SALIAP and UTAGAL Islands and the WOLEAI Airfield with good results, while three or four armed reconnaissance missions were also flown daily over the atoll, VPBs 150 and 151 alternating in this search.

182. Attacks on TRUK - - TRUK Atoll was the target for only one B-24 bombing mission during January, but this strike was in force. On the 14th, nine P-38s, escorted for navigational purposes by three B-24s, took off to scour the enemy airfields for potential interceptors in preparation for the arrival of the bombers. Of five Zekes intercepting, two were destroyed and one was probably destroyed; while a P-38, last seen diving on two Zekes into a cloud, was missing. The first wave of 22 Liberators from the 30th Army Bomber Group used instruments to bomb the North and South MOEN Airfields with 44 tons from 16,000 to 17,500 feet, but cloud formations prevented observation of results. They encountered heavy calibre, meager, and inaccurate flak, as well as three airborne Zekes which failed to attack.

183. The second formation of 21 B-24s, from the 11th Army Bomber Group, chose as the target for one of its sections the North MOEN Airfield, releasing 17.8 tons with fair accuracy to score a number of hits on the runway and dispersal areas. The other section bombed the South MOEN Airfield with 23.8 tons from 16,000 to 20,000 feet. A four-engine aircraft was observed in the dispersal area of the North MCEN Airfield.

184. On 17 January, one of three PB4Ys of VD-5, making a photographic reconnaissance of MOEN, ETEN, and PARAM Islands at TRUK Atoll from 20,000 feet, was hit in the propeller by heavy, intense, and very accurate AA fire which caught the plane with numerous other hits as well, compelling it to return to base on three engines. One of eight escorting P-38s was "ditched" from operational causes. The pilot was rescued.

185. On January 21st, 16 P-38s went over TRUK in two waves of eight planes each to provide fighter cover for 31 B-29s bombing the airfield on MOEN Island with 171 tons, as a shakedown flight for new planes and pilots. No enemy aircraft were sighted, and heavy calibre, meager, inaccurate anti-aircraft fire was met. A new runway, apparently under construction, was observed on UDOT Island.

SECRET

Enemy Air Attacks on Our Bases.

186. Attacks on the MARIANAS - - The first enemy raid of the month on our B-29 bases in the MARIANAS came in the hours before dawn on 2 January, when SAIPAN was raided by a single Betty flying at 20,000 feet, which dropped a large bomb on ISELY Field No. 1, inflicting extensive fragmentation damage on one B-29 and minor damage on four others, in addition to blasting a crater in the runway and wounding one enlisted man. A P-61 of the 6th Night Fighter Squadron made contact with the enemy plane and opened fire, scoring hits in the starboard engine, but failing to finish it off. The Betty retired at high speed by way of TINIAN, flying at low level and employing "window". Shortly after noon the same day, a Japanese Myrt was shot down at 26,500 feet between SAIPAN and TINIAN by a P-47 of the 19th Fighter Squadron flying high altitude CAP.

187. At 0413 the next day, January 3rd, a Betty, paralleling the course of a returning PBJ, appeared in the vicinity of SAIPAN, but was shot down by a Black Widow 15 miles north of MARPI Point. At 0459 a second single Japanese aircraft, identified as a Frances, was picked up by radar 150 miles north of SAIPAN. A P-61 made contact and destroyed the enemy plane at 13,000 feet, while it was still 35 miles northwest of SAIPAN.

188. At mid-day on January 14th, the GUAM CAP was vectored to intercept an enemy plane identified subsequently as a Jill. After a brief chase, the enemy was shot down 40 miles off RITIDIAN Point, GUAM, by an F4U of VMF-225.

189. The following day, January 15th, an enemy Myrt was shot down at noon by a P-47 of the 318th Fighter Group ten miles west of TINIAN, while approaching at 16,000 feet. Two parachutes were seen descending, but the ensuing search by a TINIAN picket boat failed to locate any survivors or wreckage.

190. With this success by our air defense detachments, enemy activity against our Superfort bases for the month of January came to a close. The heavy and constant bombing to which their own bases at IWO JIMA and PAGAN had been subjected since early in November, in combination with B-24 snoopers over IWO nightly at 45-minute intervals, undoubtedly contributed to this diminution of enemy offensive sorties.

C. MINOR OPERATIONS.

Operation Against CHICHI JIMA, HAHJ JIMA, and IWO JIMA, 5 January.

191. General - - In order to neutralize IWO JIMA further, and destroy installations and shipping there and at CHICHI JIMA and HAHJ JIMA, combined surface and land-based air attacks against these bases were planned for January 5th by Commander Forward Area (Commander Task Force 94, Vice Admiral J. H. Hoover).

192. The basic plan provided for advance reconnaissance of the harbors of these three islands by search aircraft on the day and night preceding the attack. PBJs and B-24s were to continue attacks on shipping and on IWO JIMA airfield preceding the day of the bombardment.

193. Early on the morning of the 5th, CHICHI JIMA was to be bombarded by the surface ships, after which these were to move southward, firing on HAHJ JIMA and

S E C R E T

IWO JIMA en route. Until the IWO JIMA bombardment commenced, P-38s and B-24s were to attack that island with a view to neutralizing enemy aircraft based there.

194. Composition of Force - - The surface force scheduled to participate in the bombardment was as follows:

Task Group 94.9 - Rear Admiral A. E. Smith.

CHESTER (F), PENSACOLA, SALT LAKE CITY	3 CA
DUNLAP, FANNING, CUMMINGS, ELLET,	
ROE, DAVID W. TAYLOR	6 DD

195. Air forces participating in the operation during daylight on the 5th were 55 Liberators and 8 P-38s.

196. The Approach - - The surface ships sortied from SAIPAN on 1 January 1945, on receiving a report of the presence of enemy shipping in the BONINS. The task group cruised to the east of the VOLCANOES until time for the approach, when it took a westerly track, passing to the south of HAH A JIMA and thence north, so as to approach CHICHI JIMA from the west.

197. While south of CHICHI JIMA, at approximately 0200 on the morning of the 5th, a Japanese LST or small AK was located. It was taken under fire by DUNLAP, CUMMINGS, and FANNING, and after being immobilized, FANNING was left to sink it. This she did by gunfire and a torpedo hit. The total expenditure of explosives on this target was high; 904 rounds of 5-inch/38, 800 rounds of 40-mm, and two torpedoes being required. In order to prevent detection of the force, illumination was not used, and this contributed to the large number of rounds expended.

198. Bombardment of CHICHI JIMA - - As the force arrived off CHICHI JIMA, visibility was poor, preventing air spot. No worthwhile shipping targets were in evidence. The island was bombarded for approximately two hours with 1042 eight-inch and 1327 five-inch projectiles. Some good fires resulted, and one or more hits were made by SALT LAKE CITY on a small AK discovered during the withdrawal. The extent of the damage was impossible to ascertain.

199. The bombardment of CHICHI JIMA was not without cost to our ships. DAVID W. TAYLOR struck a mine, receiving considerable damage forward, which ultimately required a navy yard overhaul. Four men were killed when her No. 1 magazine was flooded. FANNING received slight damage from a 25 to 40-mm shell, which caused an eight-inch hole in the skin of the ship. Both ships were detached and proceeded in company to SAIPAN.

200. Bombardment of HAH A JIMA - - From CHICHI JIMA, the Task Group proceeded southward to HAH A JIMA, where the force split; SALT LAKE CITY, DUNLAP, and CUMMINGS bombarding HIGASHI MINATO; and the balance of the force (less DAVID W. TAYLOR and FANNING) bombarding the OKIMURA Area. Rounds fired totalled 363 eight-inch and 406 five-inch. Again weather conditions were such as to prevent spotting, and make damage assessment difficult.

201. Air Attacks on IWO JIMA - During this same time, and before the surface ships arrived at IWO JIMA, seven P-38s, escorted navigationally by three Liberators, made strafing attacks on revetments at the south and center airfields and anti-aircraft positions, in addition to destroying an airborne Zeke. An eighth Lightning failed to participate when it crashed at sea 25 miles east of IWO JIMA as

S E C R E T

the result of engine trouble. The pilot was killed. One P-38 was damaged by the intense flak from light and medium weapons that met the strafers.

202. Fifty-two B-24s then came over the target, releasing 101 tons of bombs on the two airfields in the face of heavy calibre, moderate, and accurate anti-aircraft fire which inflicted minor damage on 12 bombers. Only one enemy aircraft was observed airborne, and it did not attempt interception. Photographs taken the same day by four PB4Ys of VD-5 revealed 29 craters on the northeast-southwest runways on MOTOYAMA No. 1, and the other runway had 15 craters, rendering these strips temporarily inoperational. Twenty-one craters on the center airfield's northeast-southwest strip also made it unserviceable. The air support proved adequate to prevent serious attacks on the surface force.

203. Bombardment of IWO JIMA - - Ships opened fire on IWO JIMA at approximately 1500, and thanks to improved weather, this bombardment was considered to be effective in damaging installations there. Numerous fire and explosions occurred as a result of hits by some of the 980 eight-inch and 2940 five-inch fired while in this region.

204. At about 1800, bogeys which had been in the area from time to time during the day approached the force, and one made an unsuccessful torpedo attack on ROE. No damage was sustained, and the force returned to base without further incident.

Operations Against IWO JIMA, 24 January.

205. A second coordinated air-surface force bombardment of IWO JIMA was scheduled for 24 January by Commander Forward Area, Central Pacific.

206. Coordination of the plans for the joint operation was reviewed at a conference between the surface and air commands prior to sortie of the surface forces. The air forces were to provide six waves of bombers and P-38s at half-hour intervals from 1000 until 1230, as a prelude to the ship bombardment which was to follow immediately. The last wave of bombers was to afford spotting planes with naval spotters embarked.

207. The task group scheduled to participate in the surface bombardment was under the command of Rear Admiral O. C. Badger and consisted of the following ships:

INDIANA (F)	1 BB
CHESTER, PENSACOLA, SALT LAKE CITY	3 CA
DUNLAP, CASE, CUMMINGS, FANNING,	
BOYD, CASSIN, BORIE	7 DD
GWIN	1 DM

208. En route to the island, PB4Ys preceded the ships as a barrier patrol.

209. As the surface ships approached the island on 24 January, word was received that the air strikes would be delayed so as to commence at 1230 and end at 1430. Ships accordingly maneuvered until 1435, when the bombardment was commenced. During this period a few enemy aircraft were in the area, and GWIN succeeded in shooting down one. No successful attacks were made on our ships.

210. Our own air strikes delivered at this time consisted of 43 Liberators escorted by 10 P-38s. These dropped 88.6 tons of bombs on the center airfield and

S E C R E T

anti-aircraft positions, while 20 B-29s contributed 117 tons to the total, with poor to excellent results. Six other Liberators thereafter acted as spotters for the naval gunfire until ordered home because of the cloud formation closing in on the island.

211. No enemy planes intercepted at any time, though one was seen taxiing away from bomb hits on a runway, while a second one was airborne, but remained at a discreet distance. The anti-aircraft fire was of heavy calibre, meager to moderate, and sufficiently accurate to inflict minor damage on one bomber and major damage on two others, wounding a crewman in one plane and causing the other B-24 to crash out of control in the channel between TINIAN and SAIPAN. Eight of the 11 members of this crew were rescued. The island defenders resorted to tracking, predicted concentration, and barrage fire control, in an effort to find the best method.

212. Firing on shore targets continued from 1435 until 1532, when the arrival in the area of a heavy weather front obscured the island and made spotting impossible. Intermittent fire was continued as weather permitted until 1552, when "Cease Fire" was ordered. Only about 55% of the total contemplated ammunition allowance had been expended, and about one half of the schedule remained unfired when the weather interfered with further bombardment. Damage done was largely indeterminate, though three small AKs were destroyed, or burned and beached, and a number of small fires were started near the East Boat Basin. Shore batteries responded ineffectively to ships' gunfire.

213. On completion of the bombardment, ships retired to base without further incident.

Minor Bombardments.

214. Three minor bombardments of various enemy held islands were conducted during January. In the MARSHALLS, BRACKETT (DE) at 1430 on 5 January bombarded enemy gun positions on TAROA for 15 minutes in conjunction with an air strike. Some return fire was experienced, but no casualties were suffered. BRACKETT could not observe clearly what damage was caused to the enemy, but believed a gun emplacement to have been knocked out.

215. At YAP, an anti-submarine hunter-killer operation was underway close in to the island on 11 and 12 January. EVANS (DD) and McCOY REYNOLDS (DE), in conjunction with this operation, bombarded various gun positions and installations on both days. Minor damage was caused to the enemy, and neither of our ships was hit.

216. On 15 and 16 January, SWANSON (DD) executed a two day bombardment of ROTA Island. The purpose of the mission was continued neutralization of the island, and training in air-spotting methods for airborne Marine Corps Shore Fire Control - - naval gunfire personnel. It is believed that one or more gun emplacements were destroyed, and valuable experience was gained.

Reconnaissance of JALUIT Atoll.

217. To obtain information of conditions on JALUIT, a party of three native Marshallese scouts was put ashore on the night of 9 January, and with another native of JALUIT, was successfully taken off again by BRACKETT (DE) on 11 January. The reconnaissance developed some interesting items of information, among which were the following:

S E C R E T

- (1) About 1141 Japanese of an original garrison of 4000 remain on the atoll.
- (2) A few tanks, and approximately 30 mobile artillery and AA guns, remain.
- (3) Only native food still exists, all Japanese rations having been consumed by July 1944. There is sufficient native food to sustain life.
- (4) Napalm bomb strikes are more dreaded than any other type, the incendiary strikes in November having been particularly effective in killing Japanese personnel.
- (5) No Japanese ships are known to have come to JALUIT Atoll since December 1943.
- (6) There is no apparent inclination to surrender.
- (7) Three U.S. aviators captured on JALUIT in July 1944 were decapitated after being treated badly.

Occupation of FAIS Island.

218. FAIS Island, lying a short distance to the south and east of ULITHI, was suspected to be a base for enemy midget submarines and perhaps a communications center. Because of these suspicions, Commander Western CAROLINES Sub-Area ordered a landing there to ascertain the actual facts. One company (reinforced) of the 321st Infantry, from the Defense Forces, Southern PALAUS, made the attack.

219. The landing on the southeast beach of FAIS in the vicinity of the native village started at 0935, 1 January, and the landing of essential troops, equipment, and supplies was completed before dark. The force assigned for the occupation of FAIS was Task Unit 94.5.10, consisting of SEID (DE 256), LST 225, and LCIs 725, 77, and 81.

220. The same day, troops from the task unit searched the western half of the island. No Japanese were encountered, but many indications of recent occupancy were discovered. The next day, Task Unit 94.5.10 reconnoitred the eastern half of the island, and though the search was more intense than on the preceding day, no Japanese were encountered.

221. On 3 January, the task unit started a second and more detailed reconnaissance of the western half of the island. At 0930 contact was made with the enemy at a cave in that portion of FAIS. After a short engagement, eight Japanese (4 navy men and 4 civilians) were killed; while we had 3 killed, 2 seriously wounded, and 3 slightly wounded. At 1000, six Japanese civilians surrendered near the center of the island. Interrogation of the prisoners, later verified by questioning of the natives, indicated that there were only three Japanese remaining on the island, and that they were armed with only one rifle. During the day, the radio station and hospital were destroyed after all valuable equipment had been removed.

222. On the 4th, the task unit completed its search of the island for the three Japanese sailors at large, but was unsuccessful in finding any of them. All enemy boats and buildings of importance were destroyed after all valuable equipment had been removed for salvage.

223. The American flag was raised on FAIS at 1600, 4 January, thus establishing American occupation; then the task unit returned to ULITHI and PELELIU, after first restoring the rule of the native king.

S E C R E T

224. Information gleaned from Japanese prisoners and from those of the 280 natives questioned indicated that FAIS had never been used by the Japanese as a base for submarines or surface warships. It was also learned that prior to 17 July 1944 the radio station had maintained contact with YAP, but that our bombings on that date damaged it to such an extent as to make it inoperative for transmitting. The receiving equipment, however, continued to obtain much valuable information until it too became inoperative on 24 December, although unable to relay the information thus received, because of the transmitter being out of commission.

225. The task unit found that a landing field could be built in the central portion of FAIS with a 2000 yard runway and at economical expenditure. Other than as a site for a landing field, however, the island had no naval or military value. Economically, the chief value of FAIS would be as a source of phosphate and copra.

Enemy Activity.

226. Attack on PELELIU - - On 18 January, two raiding parties of Japanese, each in a type "A" landing barge, landed on PELELIU. One group, consisting of 27 Japanese troops, landed on the eastern shore, while the other party, numbering 37 troops, came ashore on the western beaches. Both groups were armed with pistols (in the case of the officers), rifles, pikes, demolition charges, home-made hand grenades, and Molotov cocktails. A captured operation order indicated that the groups of NIKUO-KOTAI (Suicide Units) left ARAKEBESAN on the 17th with the three-fold mission of damaging aircraft on the field, destroying ammunition, and attacking personnel of the Western CAROLINES Sub-Area Headquarters.

227. Screen vessels off PELELIU detected the barge approaching the western shore, and the island was alerted. All 27 of the enemy landing on the eastern shore were killed. Those landing on the western shore were reinforced by Japanese already concealed on the island, who came out of hiding to join the landing assault, and a total of 49 of these were killed and two prisoners taken. Thus a total of 76 Japanese was killed, against our own losses of one killed and five wounded.

228. Enemy Activity on ANGAUR - - Between 16 and 31 January, two Japanese soldiers were definitely observed on ANGAUR. One of our soldiers was wounded as a result of the explosion of a grenade thrown by one of these enemy troops. It is not known whether they had succeeded in concealing themselves on the island since its occupation by our forces in September 1944, or whether they had slipped over from PELELIU or one of the Japanese-held PALAU Islands.

PART V.

SUBMARINES.

A. OPERATIONS OF PACIFIC FLEET SUBMARINES.

January Results, Pacific Ocean Areas.

229. Summary of Ships Sunk and Damaged - - During January, the submarines of Task Force 17 under the command of Vice Admiral C. A. Lockwood, jr., reported the following damage to enemy shipping: (Included in LOSSES, PART II.)

S E C R E T

Ships Sunk: - (193,300 tons)
Combatant: - 1 DD, 2 PC.
Auxiliary: - 8 AO, 1 AP, 19 AK, 12 small craft, 1 APD.

Ships Damaged: - (95,850 tons)
Combatant: - 1 DD, 1 PC.
Auxiliary: - 1 AO, 12 AK, 1 AP, 2 UN, 2 small craft.

(NOTE: In the following accounts of sinkings, only vessels over 500 tons are included; however, the total tonnage figures include small craft.)

230. Analysis - - Pacific Fleet submarines sank or damaged 279,150 tons of enemy shipping in January 1945, compared with 291,400 tons sunk or damaged in December, 1944. While the total number of ships sunk in January was 33 compared with 23 sunk in December, the total tonnage of enemy shipping sunk decreased from 197,300 tons in December, to 183,300 tons in January. In January, 18 enemy ships (95,850 tons) were damaged by Pacific Fleet submarines, compared with 10 ships or 94,100 tons damaged in December. The January results were smaller than those of December despite the fact that there were 47 Pacific Fleet submarines on patrol during the month, compared with only 41 on patrol in the month of December. The implications are that the enemy has withdrawn much of his shipping from the sea lanes, and that most of the enemy's combatant units have already been sunk. Some of the more interesting and productive patrols are described below.

Coordinated Attack Groups.

231. Task Group 17.21 - - The attack group composed of BARB, PICUDA and QUEENFISH, under the command of Commander C. E. Loughlin in QUEENFISH, patrolled in the FORMOSA Straits and waters adjacent to the CHINA Coast. These waters proved to be by far the most fertile field for targets during January. It is interesting to note that this group accounted for 50% of the total tonnage sunk by Pacific Fleet submarines during the month. The group sank 12 enemy vessels for a total of 92,600 tons and damaged six ships or 41,500 tons.

232. The damage to the enemy was allocated within the group as follows:

	<u>Sunk</u>	<u>Damaged</u>	<u>Total tons Sunk or Damaged</u>
QUEENFISH	1 AO, 1/3 sampan		10,100 tons
BARB	1 AP, 3 AK*, 4 AE, 1/3 sampan	4 AK	86,500 tons
PICUDA	<u>1 AO, 2 AK*, 1/3 sampan</u>	<u>1 AK, 1 AP</u>	<u>37,500 tons</u>
Totals. . . .	5 AK, 4 AE, 2 AO, 1 AP, 1 sampan	5 AK, 1 AP	134,100 tons

* (NOTE: BARB and PICUDA given joint credit for the sinking of 2 AKs.)

233. On 1 January, almost at the entrance to TOKARA Strait, the group sighted an armed enemy sampan and all three ships were credited with sinking the sampan by gunfire.

234. At 0600 on 7 January, while patrolling off TUNG YUNG TAO, BARB made radar contact with a seven ship convoy coming towards BARB and PICUDA. At 1025, PICUDA while submerged fired four bow tubes at a large tanker, two of the torpedoes finding their mark and sinking the tanker. While PICUDA was preparing to attack

S E C R E T

an AK at a range of 600 yards, a float plane was sighted, and PICUDA dived. Escorting destroyers dropped depth-charges, but none was close to PICUDA.

235. The next day at 1300 off the CHINA Coast, BARB's radar picked up an eight ship convoy at a range of 22,000 yards. At 1723, BARB, from a depth of 60 feet, fired three torpedoes at a large AP, and two minutes later fired three more at an AE. From the first attack, BARB was credited with sinking an AP and given half credit for sinking an AK which was later finished off by PICUDA. Two of the second set of torpedoes made hits on the AE, which exploded with such violence that BARB was forced sideways and down, and later a section of her deck grating was found ripped from the superstructure due to the explosion.

236. At 1915 QUEENFISH, on the surface, fired four torpedoes at an AO of the convoy with a range of 1700 yards. All torpedoes missed.

237. PICUDA's turn came at 1954 when, on the surface, she fired her bow tubes at two large AKs and obtained one hit on each target, sinking one AK and damaging the other. One of the AKs had been hit previously by BARB, and the other one was sunk by BARB in a later attack at 2012, when she fired three torpedoes at two AKs, sinking them both.

238. BARB's third torpedo attack at 2034, while surfaced, sank another AE with three torpedoes making three hits. BARB's report stated that the explosion, "far surpassed Hollywood, and was one of the biggest explosions of the war".

239. QUEENFISH came back at 2150, and, on the surface, with a range of 2990 yards, fired four torpedoes at a tanker, two of which sank the ship. Two shots were fired at an escorting destroyer at a range of 3390 yards, but both missed.

240. At 2200 BARB and PICUDA reported fire from shore batteries along the coast about 12,000 yards away. Shells struck the water some 7000 yards from BARB.

241. There was only one merchantman left in the convoy, and at 2316 PICUDA fired four stern tubes, but all missed and the ship got away. The group secured from battle stations after sinking seven of the eight merchant ships of the convoy.

242. On 23 January, BARB, commanded by Commander E. B. Fluckey, made one of the most aggressive attacks of the war. BARB's log of the events surrounding this attack follows: (See Plate IV.)

"23 Jan. Conducting inshore surface search for convoy anchorage. Maneuvering constantly to avoid collision with Junks. Present entourage consists of several hundred darkened Junks.

0030 Commenced taking PPI coast contour plots, for plexiglass matching with large scale chart of coast, to search for ships.

0112 Chart plot matching showed an uncharted smear northwest of INCOG Light. Checked this on A-scope which showed saturation pips at 29,800 yards. Radar officer and operator said they were definite ships. Doubt existed, however, for our radar has never before had saturation pips on ships at such a range. Continuing to search up coast towards INCOG Light.

0157 Moonset.

S E C R E T

- 0240 Cleared Junks. None ahead. Much prefer to have them, or know the reason for their absence.
- 0300 Ship Contact #5B. Rounded INCOG Islands and had radar contact on a very large group of anchored ships in the lower reaches of NAMKWAN Harbor. Slowed to take stock of the situation. Fully realize our critical position and the potential dangers involved. Estimate the situation as follows:
- (a) Recent unknown mining in this vicinity is a known fact. Mines could be laid from INCOG Island to TAE Island. However, a more effective minefield would be from INCOG Island to PINGFONG, the eastern entrance to NAWKWAN Harbor, which would provide a protected anchorage behind it. Since the position of the anchored convoys is too close to this line, assume the latter minefield does not exist. The former, though doubtful, must remain a possibility, particularly in view of the absence of Junks.
 - (b) Jap radar interference is showing up on the A-scope and PPI, sweeping. One escort appears to be patrolling several thousand yards northeast, and a second escort to the east of the anchored ships, covering the most logical position for entry and attack. A third escort is working close to INCOG Light, apparently more concerned with using his radar to keep himself off the rocks. Visibility is very poor.
 - (c) Assumed the closely anchored columns would be heading about 050° T, heading into the wind and seas with a current of 1 knot. Plotted the navigational position from which we would attack, making our approach from the southeast. The attack would be made on approximately a 60° track, so that our stern tubes would be fired with zero gyros on our selected retirement course.
 - (d) Elected to retire through an area marked "UNEXPLORED" on our large scale chart, which contained sufficient "rocks awash" and "rocks, position doubtful" to make any over-ambitious escorts think twice before risking a chase. This course would also cross the mass of Junks which would be a definite and final barrier to all pursuit. While retiring, radar will only be used sweeping quickly from broad on one bow to broad on the other. All damage must be assessed without it.
 - (e) Countermeasures expected will be searchlights, gunfire, and hot pursuit. Against this we will have a stern tube salvo, 40-mm and automatic weapons.
 - (f) Inasmuch as our attack position will be 6 miles inside the 10 fathom curve, and 19 miles inside the 20 fathom curve, we will require an hour's run before being forced down. Consequently our attack must be a complete surprise and the force of our attack must be sufficient to completely throw the enemy off balance. We have four torpedoes forward and eight aft. No time will be available for reload; for a speedy, darting, knife thrust attack will increase the probability of success.
- 0320 Figure the odds are 10 to 1 in our favor. Man Battle Stations Torpedoes.
- 0325 Fortunately we have a flexible control party, and at this point we flexed it. C.O. secured the bridge and took over the conning tower; target plot was secured and the Assistant Approach officer was shifted

S E C R E T

to navigational plot; plotting officer was shifted to PPI; and another officer was shifted to the bridge. Seriously considering placing crew in life jackets, but the atmosphere throughout the boat is electric. The men are more tense than I've ever seen them. Save for an occasional report of "single ping sounding, 6 fathoms", the control room is so quiet the proverbial pin would have sounded like a depth-charge. Discarded the idea of life jackets as definitely alarmist, with so many hearts doing flip flops. Do not consider it advisable in our present precarious position to send a contact report to the PICUDA. She could not possibly attack before dawn, and get out. Will send one after the attack, when our presence is known.

0352 Range 6000 yards. Made ready all tubes. Ships are anchored, in three columns about 500 yards apart with a few scattered ships farther inshore. This, frankly, must be the most beautiful target of the war. Actual measurement of target length is 4200 yards. Ships are banked three deep. Even an erratic torpedo can't miss. Radar officer counts twelve ships on one bearing. Estimate at least 30 ships present. Our biggest job will be to prevent too many torpedoes from hitting one ship. For purposes of set-up chose one of the large ships to left of center of the near column as target. Using TBT bearings.

0402 Torpedo Attack #4. Fired tubes 1, 2, 3, 4 with 150% spread, track 65° starboard, gyros 30 left, torpedo run 3225 yards, depth set 6 feet, target speed 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ knots, target course 040° T.

0402-16 Fired Tube #1.

0402-26 Fired Tube #2.

0402-36 Fired Tube #3.

0402-46 Fired Tube #4.

Right full rudder, all ahead standard. Sounding 5 fathoms. Shifted target to right for ships ahead in near column.

0404 Torpedo Attack #4B. Fired tubes 7, 8, 9, 10 with 300% spread, track 65° starboard, gyros 3 right, range 3020 yards, depth set 6 feet.

0404-42 Fired Tube #7.

0404-48 Fired Tube #8.

0404-57 Fired Tube #9.

0405-07 Fired Tube #10.

All ahead flank!!! Commanding Officer manned bridge.

0406-02 Torpedo #2 hit on target. Timed and observed.

0406-09 Torpedo #3 hit on target. Timed and observed.

S E C R E T

0406-27 Torpedo #1 hit in 2nd column. Timed and heard on bridge.
0407-27 Torpedo #4 hit in 3rd column. Timed and observed.
0408-16 Torpedo #6 hit in 1st column. Timed and observed.
0408-31 Torpedo #8 hit in 1st column. Timed and observed.
0408-36 Torpedo #5 hit in 2nd column. Timed and observed.
0409-41 Torpedo #7 hit in 3rd column. Timed and observed.

Main target of attack 4A, large AK(EU), in first column was hit by torpedoes #2 and #3. Target observed to settle and undoubtedly sink. Unidentified ship in second column was hit by torpedo #1. This was not observed since shielded by main target after turn to right. Damaged. Large AK, in third column, hit by torpedo #4, shortly thereafter caught on fire. Fire later flared up 5 or 6 times then went out in a manner similar to a sinking ship. Probably sunk.

Torpedo #6 hit in the first column. Believed to have hit in main target of attack #4A or ship close to this target. Observation not sufficiently accurate enough to claim additional damage. Large AK, in first column, to right of main target of attack #4A, hit by torpedo #8. Ship belched forth a huge cloud of smoke. Damaged. Unidentified ship, in second column hit by torpedo #5. The whole side of this ship blew out in our direction in a manner similar to an AE or the magazine of a large warship. Ship sank. Large AE, in third column hit by torpedo #7. Ship blew up with a tremendous explosion. Ship sank. Tracers of all descriptions flew out from the two ships which exploded. At the same time several large calibre projectiles, estimated 6-12 inch, with tracers hurtled through the air. A moment after this, searchlights were seen sweeping about for a short while.

0413 Smoke from the ships hit, on fire, and exploding completely obscured all ships and prevented any further observation of other damage. The BARB is now high-balling it for the 20 fathom curve at 21.6 knots, broken field running through the Junk fleet, with the radar sweeping rapidly 30° either side of the bow - - wildly maneuvering when some of the Junks are inside the sea return. Expect to see a Junk piled up on the bow at any second.

0436 Gunfire from well astern. Some poor Junks getting it.

0438 Some form of navigational light lighted on TAE Island. Probably to aid the escorts' navigation.

0445 Sent contact report to PICUDA.

0511 The Galloping Ghost of the CHINA Coast crossed the 20 fathom curve with a sigh. Never realized how much water that was before. However, life begins at forty (fathoms). Kept going."

243. BARB was credited on these attacks with sinking 1 AK, 2 AE, and damaging 2 AK, and 1 unidentified vessel.

S E C R E T

Individual Patrols.

244. TAUTOG's Thirteenth - - The thirteenth War Patrol of the TAUTOG, under the command of Commander T. S. Baskett, was conducted in the East CHINA Sea off the west coast of HYUSHU.

245. TAUTOG's first successful attack of this patrol was on 17 January, off KAIMON MISAKI, when, while submerged, four torpedoes were fired at a lone APD with a range of 650 yards. Two of the torpedoes struck the target, which was seen to disintegrate. On 20 January off SAISHO TO, a small AK traveling by itself was sunk, when two of three torpedoes fired on a surface attack hit their mark.

246. At 1600, the following day, while patrolling north of SASEBO, TAUTOG sighted a tanker at a range of 3000 yards. While submerged, three bow torpedoes were fired; two hit the tanker, but the target did not sink, TAUTOG turned and fired two stern torpedoes, and both of them missed. At 1631, TAUTOG turned again and fired two bow tubes for one hit, but the target still did not sink. As patrol vessels were closing in, one final stern shot was attempted, and it missed. About one hour later, TAUTOG surfaced, and the target had disappeared. TAUTOG was credited with the sinking of a medium tanker.

247. On 26 January, while en route to MIDWAY, TAUTOG sank a 50-ton trawler by gunfire. TAUTOG was credited with sinking 1 APD, 1 AK, 1 AO and 1 trawler, for a total of 8450 tons.

248. SPOT's First War Patrol - - The first war patrol of SPOT, under the command of Commander W. S. Post, jr., was conducted in the East CHINA Sea and YELLOW Sea areas. SPOT, along with BALAO and ICEFISH, formed a coordinated attack group, but no coordinated attacks developed.

249. After two unsuccessful attacks on 2 January and 18 January, SPOT sank her first enemy target on 19 January while patrolling off SHANTUNG Promontory. One torpedo, fired while surfaced, scored a hit, and the target, an AK, blew up and sank.

250. Six hours later, at 0600, SPOT sighted a medium tanker in ballast at a range of 8000 yards. Six bow tubes were fired and all missed. SPOT, still surfaced, swung around and fired three stern tubes. The first two torpedoes of this salvo sank the tanker.

251. During the remainder of her patrol, SPOT sank 6 small trawlers, 1 small AK, and 1 small coal-burning vessel, which gave her a total of 11,200 tons sunk for her first war patrol.

252. ASPRO's Sixth War Patrol - - ASPRO's sixth war patrol was conducted in the area south of FORMOSA. The major part of this patrol was devoted to life-guard duty which resulted in picking up four downed aviators in two rescues.

253. ASPRO's first contact with the enemy was at 0406 on 2 January, at approximately 22°-19' N., 119°-18' E., when a convoy of two large targets with three escorts was picked up on ASPRO's radar at a range of 24,750 yards. ASPRO tracked the target until 0714, when six bow torpedoes were fired while submerged, followed by one properly timed explosion. The escorts dropped three depth-charges, but ASPRO escaped without further trouble. ASPRO was credited with damaging a 7500 ton AK.

S E C R E T

254. On 5 January at 2230, ASPRO contacted an enemy tanker dead in the water, with an escort patrolling to the west of the tanker. By approaching from the off side, ASPRO, at a depth of 25 feet, was able to make an attack in which four torpedoes were fired at a range of 2500 yards for two hits, and the tanker was seen to sink.

255. The four airmen were picked up on 21 January off the southwest coast of FORMOSA. One of them was on a raft 12 miles inside the restricted zone.

256. SPADEFISH's Third War Patrol - - The third war patrol of SPADEFISH was conducted in the YELLOW Sea area. The commanding officer of SPADEFISH was commander of a coordinated attack group consisting of SPADEFISH, POMPON, ATULE, and JALLAO.

257. While patrolling in the YELLOW Sea on 27 January, SPADEFISH made radar contact on a convoy of approximately six ships. This contact was the result of an earlier message from POMPON, which had sighted the convoy four hours before. POMPON had been detected by the escort, and could not attack. At 0231, on 28 January, SPADEFISH, while submerged ahead of the convoy, fired three bow torpedoes at an AK. All torpedoes hit their mark, and the AK sank. One minute later, four torpedoes were fired at another AK and one torpedo explosion was heard. SPADEFISH then went to 120 feet (bottom at that point was only 180 feet), where she was depth-charged without serious damage. When she surfaced two hours later, the second AK was seen to be burning furiously, and Commander, Submarines Pacific Fleet credited SPADEFISH with sinking a 7500 ton freighter, and damaging another freighter of the same type.

258. SPADEFISH's next attack was on a convoy of three merchant ships with four escorts crossing the YELLOW Sea on 31 January. Six torpedoes were fired at the contact while submerged. One explosion was heard, and resulted in the sinking of a small PC.

259. On 2 February, while patrolling near SEKIMO SUIDO, at 1503, SPADEFISH sighted a lone merchant ship in ballast. At 1654, with the range at 1500 yards, three bow tubes were fired while submerged, with the last torpedo hitting the stern of the target. At 1707, SPADEFISH turned around and fired one stern shot, which sank the target.

260. On 6 February, while five miles from PORT ARTHUR, SPADEFISH sighted two medium size freighters. At 1315, with the range at 1480 yards, SPADEFISH made a submerged attack, firing three torpedoes, one of which sank one of the AK. SPADEFISH headed away from PORT ARTHUR, and an hour later was depth-charged without damage by what was probably an enemy plane.

261. SPADEFISH was credited with sinking 3 AK, 1 PC, and damaging 1 AK for a total of 23,900 tons.

Submarines Lost.

262. The Commander Submarines, Pacific Fleet, reported that SWORDFISH was overdue from patrol in January and was presumed lost.

B. ANTI-SUBMARINE ACTIVITY.

General.

263. The Commander Hawaiian Sea Frontier indicated that the 33 reported submarine contacts for January were a new high for such incidents in the Hawaiian Sea Frontier. A study of these contacts by Commander Hawaiian Sea Frontier indicated the possibility of an enemy submarine within 150 miles of OAHU from 2 January to 10 January, and a suspected submarine patrolling between OAHU and the JOHNSTON Islands from 25 to 31 January.

264. There were no reported sinkings of United States naval or merchant ships in the Pacific Ocean Area during January, although the USS SERPENS (AK 97) was sunk on 29 January while at anchor off LUNGA Beach, GUADALCANAL, due possibly to an enemy submarine attack. An anti-submarine search was instituted immediately and SC 1039 obtained a sound contact between LUNGA and KOLI, dropping depth-charges without results. The search was abandoned on 1 February without further contacts.

265. There were indications of considerable enemy submarine activity during the month in the EMPIRE area, suggesting the possibility of a renewal of large-scale submarine operations. The more fruitful anti-submarine operations will be described below.

Planes of VPB-111.

266. On 5 January, two planes of VPB-111, on routine patrol in the sector covering the BONIN and VOLCANO Islands, sighted a midget submarine surfaced two miles southwest of CHICHI JIMA at 1318. One plane strafed the submarine, and the other dropped three bombs, with two of the bombs falling 20 feet short of the enemy, and the third 30 feet over the target. When the bombs detonated, the submarine disappeared for a few seconds, surfaced again, and then settled out of sight, stern first, with a list to starboard. A large oil slick 175 feet in diameter appeared where the submarine went down, and it is probable that the submarine was sunk.

Sinking of Midget Submarine by LST 225.

267. On 12 January, at 0755, while anchored in KOSSOL Passage, LST 131 sighted a midget submarine approaching her starboard quarter. LST 131 opened fire with one 40-mm gun, and the submarine turned towards LST 225. At 0802, LST 225 opened fire on the submarine as it circled the bow of the ship. Several shells ricocheted off or exploded on the periscope. The submarine headed for LST 225, which continued to pour gunfire into the enemy until it exploded and disappeared within 50 feet of the LST.

Attack by USS FLEMING.

268. While escorting a convoy proceeding from ULITHI to ENIWETOK, USS FLEMING (DE 32), at 2316, on 13 January, obtained a radar contact on a target with a range of 14,000 yards. At 1900 yards, a good sonar contact was obtained. At 2351, a depth-charge pattern was fired, followed by four hedgehog attacks. After the last hedgehog attack, reddish colored flashes were observed in the water, followed by a heavy explosion. Twenty minutes later, while FLEMING was preparing for another attack on a contact at a range of 1500 yards, another explosion occurred, and the contact was lost. FLEMING continued the search throughout the night

S E C R E T _

without results. At dawn, FLEMING found a large oil slick with no debris at the scene of the attack. FLEMING is credited with "probably damaging" a submarine.

CONKLIN, CORBESIER, RABY Killer Group.

269. The CONKLIN (DE 439) (OTC), CORBESIER (DE 438), and RABY (DE 698) comprised a killer group directed to search for a submarine that had been sighted and unsuccessfully attacked by PBM3D of VPB-21 in the evening of 21 January.

270. The group conducted a search in the area between ULITHI and YAP. At 0250 on 23 January, CORBESIER made radar contact with a target at a range of 22,000 yards. Sonar contact was obtained at 0345, when five hedgehog attacks were made with negative results. Contact was then lost.

271. At 0902, CORBESIER again made sonar contact, and with range of 1900 yards made another hedgehog attack without results. CONKLIN with a sonar contact at a range of 2800 yards, made a hedgehog attack at 0934 and four to five hedgehog explosions were heard. This was followed by a violent explosion with a considerable quantity of oil and debris on the surface.

272. CONKLIN was credited with "probably sinking" an enemy submarine 19 miles north northeast of YAP, and CORBESIER and RABY received "supporting credit for contributory action".

PART VI.

SOUTHWEST PACIFIC.

A. GENERAL.

273. Naval vessels in the Southwest Pacific Area were manned by more than 80,000 naval personnel. In view of the great part played by these naval forces in the LINGAYEN Operation, and of the fact that Pacific Fleet forces were principally engaged in closely integrated supporting missions, in addition to supplying heavy reinforcements to the SEVENTH Fleet, this operation is treated here with considerably greater detail than has hitherto been customary in describing operations which are not under the command of Cincpac-Cincpoa.

274. By the beginning of January 1945, the enemy's air power throughout the PHILIPPINES had been neutralized to such an extent that he was thereafter able to muster from airfields there only small groups or single planes to oppose our operations. All of LEYTE was firmly in control of Army ground forces, with only mopping up of isolated enemy remnants to be done. Airfields in LEYTE were at last in condition to support major offensive action. Land-based air forces were firmly established in MINDORO, and Central Philippine waters had been largely cleared of all enemy combatant ships except a few submarines. The stage was set for the next major phase of the reconquest of the PHILIPPINES. (See Plates V and VI.)

275. The period required for Army Air Forces to build up sufficient air strength in LEYTE to support future operations had been considerably longer than anticipated, due to heavy rains which retarded airfield construction, and also to unexpectedly strong enemy air reaction. During this period, it had been necessary to conduct unusually protracted operations of the fast carrier task forces, both to counter enemy air reaction, and to assist in repulsing major attacks by the enemy fleet.

276. Such long sustained operations not only exposed THIRD Fleet Forces to extensive damage from enemy counter measures, but also exhausted aircraft pilots and left the ships in urgent need of upkeep and replenishment. In order to provide the necessary period of rest and logistic replenishment, both the Commander THIRD Fleet and Cincpac-Cincpoa recommended a delay in the MINDORO and LINGAYEN operations, to which CincSWPA agreed.

277. The delay further gave land-based air forces an opportunity to establish more firm control of the air, and also provided an opportunity for improvement of the shipping situation. Movement of reinforcements to LEYTE and subsequent staging to MINDORO had required most of the available transports to engage in shuttle service from Rear Area bases dispersed from MILNE Bay to MOROTAI, leaving them little time for rehearsal and orderly combat loading of troops to be employed at LINGAYEN; much less for maintenance and upkeep of the ships themselves. The additional breathing spell was therefore welcome.

278. As will be discussed below, the actual landings in the LINGAYEN area were relatively lightly opposed, as was the initial progress overland through the central plains of LUZON toward MANILA. By contrast, the Bombardment and Fire Support Groups, and the Escort Carrier and Minesweeping Groups, which preceded by three days the passage of the Amphibious Forces, were treated at LINGAYEN Gulf to a series of suicide air attacks of unparalleled ferocity, thus absorbing the efforts of the bulk

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of remaining Japanese air strength in, or capable of being staged to, the area. Nearly 30 ships were sunk or badly damaged in the early phases of this operation.

B. THE LINGAYEN OPERATION. (See Plate III)

Object and Concept of the Operation.

279. The object of the LINGAYEN operation was the prompt seizure of the Central LUZON area; the destruction of the principal defense forces; the denial to the enemy of the northern entrance to the South CHINA Sea; and the provision of bases for the support of further operations against the Japanese.

280. The concept of this operation, which was the initial and largest single operation of a series for the occupation of LUZON, visualized a major amphibious assault from NEW GUINEA and LEYTE bases, to destroy hostile forces in LUZON, re-occupy the MANILA-Central Plains area, and establish bases for the support of operations to the northward of the PHILIPPINES and for the complete occupation of LUZON. Establishment of the initial beachhead was to be followed by advance through the central plains to MANILA, occupying a number of airfield areas in the process. The target date was designated as "S-day", and was set for 9 January.

General Situation (Enemy and Own).

281. Enemy - - The operational strength of the Japanese Navy was grouped into two main forces. One force was based in the EMPIRE-FORMOSA Area, and was estimated to consist of 4 BB, 2 CV, 2 CVL, 1 CVE, 2 CA, 3 CL, and 15/20 DD. The other force was based in the SINGAPORE-INDO-CHINA area, and was thought to consist of 2 BB-XCV, 2 CA, 2 CL, and 10/15 DD. In addition, a few DDs or DEs were estimated to be operating in Philippine waters. An estimated force of 54 submarines was based mainly in the EMPIRE. A limited number of midget submarines and small patrol craft were in the inland seas of the PHILIPPINES.

282. In spite of numerous airfields on LUZON and FORMOSA, the enemy's air power had been largely neutralized by constant efforts of our carrier and land-based air forces prior to the target date. These fields were estimated to total more than 70, and their strength could be augmented by staging planes in from FORMOSA, HAINAN, or CHINA. Despite this favorable situation, the enemy's desperate and seriously damaging suicide attacks on our Bombardment, Minesweeping, and Escort Carrier Groups proved to be almost the last serious effort of the Japanese air forces in the PHILIPPINES for interference with our campaign.

283. Enemy ground strength was estimated at 150,000 troops on LUZON as of 1 January. Reinforcement of LUZON had continued at an accelerated pace, with possibly 20,000 troops landed during the first ten days of December. In the immediate vicinity of the objective area, there were an estimated 35,000 troops. After the landing, no indications were found that a determined defense of the beaches had been contemplated. The hill country to the north and east of the beaches, however, was strongly prepared and manned for defense.

284. Own Situation - - The Battle for LEYTE Gulf had given our fleets undisputed control of waters east of the PHILIPPINES; and the presence of the THIRD Fleet in that area, as well as that of our submarines in waters to the westward of LUZON, made

S-E-C-R-E-T

any sortie of Japanese Navy units into these waters extremely hazardous. Combatant units actually with the LUZON Attack Force were considered superior to any naval forces the Japanese could muster against them.

285. In the air, our land-based planes from MINDORO, LEYTE, MOROTAI, and ANGAUR, together with carrier-based planes of the THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets, constituted overwhelming air superiority. Searches from established land bases covered sectors far wider than before, including all possible approaches to the objective area. (See Plate III).

286. On the ground, the 37th and 40th Infantry Division (reinf.) of the XIV Corps were to be landed in the assault on LINGAYEN beaches; and the 6th and 43rd Infantry Divisions (reinf.) of the I Corps were to be landed in the assault at SAN FABIAN beaches. Both corps were under SIXTH Army command. A reinforcement group comprising the 158th RCT and the 25th Infantry Division (reinf.) (SIXTH Army Reserve), was to be landed two days later, as well as the 6th Ranger Battalion and the 13th Armored Group in reserve. The first four divisions to be landed on S-day included some 68,500 troops, and by the end of the month, a total of about 162,250 troops were to be ashore on LUZON. In addition, numerous guerrilla forces were known to be effectively operating in parts of LUZON.

The Landing Area.

287. LINGAYEN Gulf is a generally rectangular area about 20 miles wide and 30 miles long, exposed to the northwest, with unlimited anchorage area at the inner end, all of mineable depth. The entire inner end is bordered by sandy beaches, with such gradual slope in most places that pontoon causeways are necessary for LSTs to unload. Contrary to expectation, however, certain of the SAN FABIAN beaches were found to be suitable for dry-ramp beaching of LSTs, which contributed materially to speed of unloading.

288. The terrain inland, especially from the LINGAYEN beaches, was compartmented by many lagoons running parallel to the landing beaches, usually flanked by fish ponds, and backed by rice paddies. These conditions, however, do not appear to have offered serious obstacles to passage inland. The January season offered the driest conditions of the year in the low ground.

289. Beach defenses were weak throughout the area, and contrary to pre-assault intelligence, very few mines were found. Light, intermittent, mortar and artillery fire was encountered at the eastern beaches after landings were well advanced, but not enough to interfere seriously with operations.

290. The beaches selected for the landings were distributed over most of the south and southeast shores of LINGAYEN Gulf, one group being generally opposite the town of LINGAYEN, and the other on both sides of the town of SAN FABIAN.

S-E-C-R-E-T

Organization of Naval Forces.

291. Task Force 77 (LUZON Attack Force), under the overall command of Vice Admiral T. C. Kinkaid (Commander SEVENTH Fleet), was organized into the following groups:

77.1 Flag Group

1 AGC, 1 CL, 4 DD, Commander Support Aircraft.

77.2 Bombardment and Fire Support Group - Vice Admiral J. B. Oldendorf.

77.2.1 SAN FABIAN Fire Support Unit - Rear Admiral G. L. Weyler.

3 OBB, 2 CA, 1 CL, 10 DD, assigned UDTs (3),
and supporting landing craft.

77.2.2 LINGAYEN Fire Support Unit - Vice Admiral J. B. Oldendorf.

3 OBB, 3 CA, 9 DD, assigned UDTs (3),
and supporting landing craft.

77.3 Close Covering Group - Rear Admiral R. S. Berkey.

3 CL, 6 DD.

77.4 Escort Carrier Group - Rear Admiral C. T. Durgin.

17 CVE, 16 DD, 6 DE.

77.5 CVE-DE Hunter-Killer Group - Captain J. C. Cronin.

1 CVE, 5 DE.

77.6 Minesweeping and Hydrographic Group - Comdr. W. R. Loud.

2 DM, 1 CM, 10 DMS, 10 AM, 43 YMS,
1 PF, 1 CGC, 1 AGS, 1 HDML, 1 APD.

77.7 Screening Group - Captain J. B. McLean.

5 DD

77.8 Salvage and Rescue Group - Comdr. Huie.

6 ATF, 3 ARS, 8 LCI(L), 2 ARL, 2 ATO.

77.9 Reinforcement Group - Rear Admiral R. L. Conolly.

1 AGC, 8 DD, 6 DE, 16 APA,
3 AP, 5 AKA, 11 APD, 50 LST.

77.10 Service Group - Rear Admiral R. O. Glover.

Forces assigned plus 6 DE.
2 LST (ammunition)

78. SAN FABIAN Attack Force - Vice Admiral D. E. Barbey.

27 DD, 13 DE, 1 AGC, 1 CGC, 2 RAGC, 1 AO,
16 APA, 6 AP, 1 APH, 3 AKA, 4 AK, 5 LSD,
1 LSV, 82 LST, 20 LSM, 26 XAK, miscellaneous small craft.

79. LINGAYEN Attack Force - Vice Admiral T. S. Wilkinson.

19 DD, 6 DE, 3 AGC, 18 APA, 3 AP, 1 APH,
3 LCI, 6 AKA, 4 LSD, 2 LSV, 38 LST, 31 LSM,
miscellaneous small craft.

S-E-C-R-E-T

Supporting Forces.

292. The Pacific Fleet was assigned the continuing task of destroying any enemy naval or air forces threatening to interfere with the operation, and preventing reinforcement of air units via FORMOSA. THIRD Fleet Task Groups under Admiral Halsey were disposed originally in the area northeast of LUZON to cover the operation, and conducted air strikes against FORMOSA, OKINAWA, and northern LUZON. They later operated in the South CHINA Sea.

293. Submarines of the SEVENTH and Pacific Fleet were disposed to intercept and give warning of any approaching hostile surface forces.

294. The Fourteenth and Twentieth Air Forces, based in CHINA, supported the operation by strikes on Japanese objectives within range, and by scouting the CHINA Seas and SINGAPORE areas before and during the operation. The XXI Bomber Command and Seventh Air Force, operating from the MARIANAS, performed similar missions, striking JAPAN and scouting the northern area.

295. The Far Eastern Air Force, operating from LEYTE, MINDORO, and MOROTAI, conducted attacks against enemy lines of communications and airfields in LUZON and other islands in the PHILIPPINE Archipelago. Fighter planes of this force augmented the air cover for convoys from LEYTE to LINGAYEN Gulf.

296. Detailed activities of the supporting forces mentioned above will be found in appropriate sections elsewhere in this report.

Movement of Advanced Groups.

297. The Minesweeper Group, the Fire Support Groups, and the Escort Carrier Group (less those with the amphibious convoys), proceeded well ahead of the Attack Forces, arriving and commencing operations at LINGAYEN Gulf on S minus 3 day.

298. All groups used the same general route for approach to the objective area; through SURIGAO Strait and the MINDANAO Sea; northward through the SULU Sea, passing to the westward of NEGROS, PANAY, and MINDORO; thence well off-shore to the westward of LUZON; entering LINGAYEN Gulf on southeasterly courses. This route had been chosen in spite of the disadvantages of restricted waters and early alerting of the enemy, because it offered better protection by land-based air, a shorter route, and more favorable weather conditions.

299. The passage was made with the advanced forces divided into two main groups, each of which comprised 6 CVEs and an equal proportion of heavy ships and screen. The two groups normally remained within supporting distance of each other, and were preceded by the Minesweeping Group.

Attacks on Advanced Groups During Approach.

300. The leading groups made a daylight passage of SURIGAO Strait on 3 January. An unsuccessful suicide attempt was made on them that evening by an enemy fighter plane which crashed in the water near MAKIN ISLAND (CVE). In the Minesweeping Group ahead, minor damage to the COWANESQUE (AO) was suffered from a suicide crash, and YMS 53 received minor damage from a near-miss bomb.

S-E-C-R-E-T

301. Enemy air reconnaissance had evidently located the groups in the SULU Sea during the early morning of 4 January, and maintained contact thereafter. The first attacks on that day were delivered after 1700, in the northeastern part of the SULU Sea. OMMANEY BAY (CVE) was hit by a suicide plane which succeeded in approaching undetected by that ship. This Zeke had been seen by other ships a short time before its dive, but they found it impossible to warn OMMANEY BAY over the TBS circuit, because a long routine transmission jammed the frequency. Radar detection was difficult because of land masses nearby.

302. The carrier's planes were fully gassed and armed, and nine torpedo warheads on the hanger deck also contributed to the explosions and fires which followed the crash. The ship had to be abandoned, and after removal of personnel, a destroyer sank her with one torpedo.

303. LUNGA POINT (CVE) was narrowly missed by another suicide plane, and Army combat air patrols reported "splashing" two additional planes.

304. On 5 January, after the advanced groups had passed through MINDORO Strait, a series of three enemy raids began. The first two, at about 0800 and 1200 respectively, were intercepted and turned back by combat air patrols, with a total of 12 planes claimed as shot down. The third raid, at about 1645, was not intercepted, and was estimated to consist of 15-20 planes. Anti-aircraft fire is estimated to have shot down about five suiciders, but six others succeeded in crashing ships. LOUISVILLE (CA) and HMAS ARUNTA (DD) in the van group; and HMAS AUSTRALIA, MANILA BAY (CVE), HELM (DD), and STAFFORD (DE) in the rear group were hit. In addition, another suicide plane damaged radio and radar antennae of SAVO ISLAND (CVE) with its wingtip as it overshot and crashed close aboard. All ships were able to proceed with their groups except STAFFORD, which followed at reduced speed. Combat air patrols were estimated to have shot down 18 enemy planes during the day.

305. The Minesweeping Group, about 40 miles ahead of the Bombardment and Escort Carrier Groups, had, at 1740, been attacked by six to seven suicide planes. LCI(G) 70 was hit, receiving minor damage; while APACHE (ATF) and ORCA (AVP) also received slight damage from near misses. The remaining aircraft missed their targets.

306. Two enemy destroyers were sighted from this group west of MANILA Bay. They retired at high speed when BENNION (DD) approached; and they were subsequently attacked and damaged by planes from the CVEs.

Operations in LINGAYEN Area.

307. During the morning of 6 January, all advanced groups reached the objective area. The Escort Carrier Group operated to the north-westward of LINGAYEN Gulf, while at 0700 the minesweepers proceeded into the Gulf for sweeping operations.

308. In accordance with the plan, at 1024, the LINGAYEN Fire Support Unit (TU 77.2.2) commenced bombardment of the SANTIAGO Island Area, ceasing fire at 1259 due to lack of suitable targets. The SAN FABIAN Fire Support Unit (TU 77.2.1) bombarded SAN FERNANDO and PORO Point on the eastern shore.

309. At 1555, upon receipt of word from the minesweepers that no moored and only two floating mines had been encountered, the Bombardment Groups entered LINGAYEN Gulf in cruising formation, with the intention of conducting a half-hour's

S-E-C-R-E-T

bombardment of the landing beaches. No actual bombardment took place on 6 January, however, because of heavy enemy air attacks on the Bombardment Group.

310. Bogeys had been present almost constantly since midnight, and combat air patrols reported shooting down 18 enemy aircraft at various times during the day. At 1153, suicide attacks commenced with a near miss on RICHARD P. LEARY (DD), followed shortly by successful crashes on NEW MEXICO (OBB) and ALLEN M. SUMNER (DD). During this one day, 6 January, it is estimated that more than fifty enemy suicide planes attacked groups near the LINGAYEN area. Other ships which were hit included WALKER (DD), O'BRIEN (DD), CALIFORNIA (OBB), COLUMBIA (CL), and LOUISVILLE (CA), in addition to near misses on LOWRY and NEWCOMB (DDs). This was the second suicide crash for LOUISVILLE; and her retirement from the objective area was considered advisable. She was sent to join the Escort Carrier Group. Rear Admiral T. E. Chandler, who was on board LOUISVILLE as Commander Cruiser Division FOUR, was fatally injured.

311. Damage to WALKER, ALLEN M. SUMNER, and O'BRIEN was also serious, and they were retired on 10 January for repairs. ORCA (AVP), MINNEAPOLIS (CA), and HMAS AUSTRALIA also received minor injuries in these attacks.

312. In the meantime, the Minesweeper Group was also subjected to heavy attacks. LONG (DMS) was hit twice by suicide planes; and BROOKS (DMS) and SOUTHWARD (DMS) also suffered suicide crashes. LONG sank later, and BROOKS had to be towed to the rear area for repairs, but SOUTHWARD was able to continue operations.

313. No attacks were made during the day on the Escort Carrier Group, which maintained fighters over the objective area, shooting down a reported 18 enemy planes. The Bombardment Group reported shooting down nine aircraft with anti-aircraft fire, in addition to three reported by the minesweepers.

314. The situation appeared so serious at this time that Commander Task Group 77.2 recommended to Commander SEVENTH Fleet that drastic measures be taken to correct a condition which might otherwise require reconsideration of current plans. In response to a request by Commander SEVENTH Fleet, the Fast Carrier Task Forces cancelled scheduled strikes on FORMOSA, and concentrated instead on LUZON airfields.

315. It was noted that suicide planes in the LINGAYEN area were favoring the low approach, in contrast to the steep dives normally employed in previous operations.

316. The Bombardment Group retired to the northwestward of LINGAYEN Gulf during the night, while the Minesweeper Group remained near the mouth of the Gulf.

317. Further attacks were made on the minesweepers during darkness of the early morning of 7 January, and HOVEY (DMS) was sunk by an aircraft torpedo. In the late afternoon, PALMER (DMS) was sunk by two bombs. Both of the attacking aircraft were shot down.

318. The Bombardment Group entered LINGAYEN Gulf again at about 0800 on the 7th, and commenced bombardment of the beach areas at 1030. Underwater Demolition operations were commenced at 1500, after preliminary bombardment, and were reported complete by 1727, with only minor opposition encountered, and no beach defenses or underwater obstacles found. All bombardment was discontinued at 1728, and the ships retired to the northwestward of the gulf for the night. No attacks were made during the day on the Bombardment Group or the Escort Carrier Group, and no enemy planes were reported shot down.

S-E-C-R-E-T

319. At 0615 on the morning of the 8th, the Bombardment Group again entered the gulf, and shelled the beaches from 0800 to 1755. Areas were well covered, but few obvious targets were noted. A civilian procession was noted in one bombardment area, and gunfire there was held up until leaflets had been dropped, warning the Filipinos to get clear. A few enemy aircraft attacked between 0700 and 0800, resulting in one crash on board, and one near miss, on HMAS AUSTRALIA, with considerable damage resulting. She was relieved of further bombardment missions for the day.

320. The minesweepers were not again attacked prior to departure from the gulf on 14 January, nor was the Escort Carrier Group attacked again until 13 January.

321. The next day, 9 January, was "S-day" for the landing, and the Bombardment Group preceded the Assault Groups to their fire support areas. The scheduled bombardment commenced at 0700, and at about 0930, the first wave of landing craft beached, with no opposition. The beaches had also been bombed, strafed, and rocketed by aircraft from the Escort Carrier Group.

322. At 0740, the first enemy air attacks of the day commenced. COLUMBIA (CL) was hit by her second suicide plane, which came in suddenly out of the sun. In a second attack at 1305, MISSISSIPPI and AUSTRALIA were hit almost simultaneously, but both continued in action. COLORADO (OBB) suffered heavy personnel losses due to an anti-aircraft shell hit from one of our own ships.

323. At 1700, COLUMBIA, AUSTRALIA, LOUISVILLE, and ARUNTA (all extensively damaged) were ordered to rear areas for repairs. ALLEN M. SUMNER, WALKER, and O'BRIEN (also damaged heavily) remained in the transport screen until the next day before returning to LEYTE. The heavy fire support ships operated in the northern part of LINGAYEN Gulf during the night, leaving four destroyers for possible call-fire missions.

324. At 0650 and 0700 on the 10th, PENNSYLVANIA (OBB) reported two bomb misses without resulting damage. The group operated in fire support areas for possible call-fire during the day, and were not further attacked. There were, however, scattered air and suicide boat attacks on screening vessels in the transport area, which are described below in connection with operations of the Attack Forces.

325. At 1700, the organization of Task Group 77.2, the Bombardment and Fire Support Group, was dissolved, and the LINGAYEN Defense Force was made effective. This force consisted of remaining units of Task Group 77.2, Task Group 77.4 (Escort Carrier Group), and Task Group 77.3 (Covering Group), all under the command of Vice Admiral J. B. Oldendorf in CALIFORNIA. Rendezvous of all groups was effected during the night, and a position northwest of the entrance was taken to cover LINGAYEN Gulf.

326. During the covering period of 11-18 January, only one air attack developed, when at 0903 on 13 January, with no advance warning, an enemy plane dived into the flight deck of SALAMAU (CVE). Damage to the ship was serious, although no large fire developed. Shortly thereafter, another enemy aircraft was shot down.

327. No incident of note was reported by any of these groups during return to LEYTE.

S-E-C-R-E-T

Passage of Attack Forces.

328. Dispositions - - Passage to the objective area of the ships of Task Force 78 (SAN FABIAN Attack Force, with I Corps troops embarked), and Task Force 79 (LINGAYEN Attack Force, with XIV Corps troops embarked), was made in two main convoys, covered by the Close Covering Group (Task Group 77.3); and each convoy was provided with two CVEs for air cover. In addition, dawn-to-dusk air cover by land-based fighters and anti-submarine patrols was to be provided until after passage of MINDORO Strait. As it turned out, however, the escort carriers provided the anti-submarine patrols during this period, and on occasion the combat air patrols as well.

329. The leading convoy consisted of the assault transports and other ships of Task Force 78, plus the slow tractor groups of Task Force 79, and during part of the passage, a MINDORO resupply convoy also.

330. The second convoy, with a higher speed of advance, consisted of the two transport groups of Task Force 79. Both convoys were timed to arrive at the objective area simultaneously for the assault.

331. Approach of Leading Convoy - - The first convoy passed through LEYTE Gulf in the evening of 4 January. During the afternoon of 5 January, while in the MIN-DANAO Sea, a Japanese midget submarine fired two torpedoes at BOISE (CL) in the Close Covering Group, but missed. The submarine was attacked with depth-charges and rockets by an aircraft in the anti-submarine patrol, and was subsequently rammed and probably sunk by TAYLOR (DD). Two torpedoes which also missed were later fired at an LST unit, indicating the presence of another submarine. Hunter-killer operations, however, failed to locate the second submarine.

332. During the evening of 7 January, while in the SULU Sea, a dusk air raid by a small group of Japanese planes succeeded only in damaging LST 912 by a suicide dive. Two of the aircraft were shot down by AA fire. The LST continued in formation.

333. Shortly after 2100 on 7 January, a surface contact was made, which turned out to be a Japanese destroyer, probably of the HATSUHARU Class. The right flank destroyers CHARLES AUSBURNE, BRAINE, SHAW, and RUSSELL were directed to close, and after about 30 minutes of gunfire, the enemy destroyer sank. No damage was received by our forces.

334. "Snoopers" were present during most of the night, and at dawn, another enemy air attack developed. The combat air patrol shot down six planes, and damaged several others, but KADASHAN BAY (CVE) was crashed by a suicider, and the transport CALLAWAY was also hit. Both ships continued with the formation, but MARCUS ISLAND (CVE) had to land and service airplanes of KADASHAN BAY until repairs could be effected to the latter.

335. Approach of Second Convoy - - The second convoy of Task Force 79 passed through LEYTE Gulf in the early morning of 6 January, and was not attacked until about 1900 on 8 January, when six enemy planes came in, and a single suicider dived suddenly on KITKUN BAY (CVE), striking a glancing blow on her port side. Fires were quickly brought under control, but serious underwater damage was incurred, causing partial flooding of engine and fire rooms. The ship was taken in tow, but

S-E-C-R-E-T

was later able to proceed to LINGAYEN Gulf at 10 knots under her own power. Four of these aircraft were shot down by combat air patrols.

The Landing.

336. The ships of the Attack Force arrived on schedule at the designated transport areas in lower LINGAYEN Gulf. Debarkation of troops in LVTs and other landing craft was begun at 0715 on 9 January. Under cover of a very heavy bombardment by Fire Support Units and rocket LCIs, followed by strafing from support aircraft, the first waves landed at 0930, and by 0940 the initial assault waves were ashore on all beaches.

337. No underwater obstructions were found, and beach positions were not found manned. At LINGAYEN beaches, opposition was negligible, and troops advanced rapidly inland. At SAN FABIAN beaches, no opposition was encountered except sporadic mortar and artillery fire which began at about 1000, and caused some damage and casualties to landing craft until silenced by call-fires from surface units. •

338. Beach and shore parties were landed promptly, and general unloading was underway by 1100. The surf was only four feet in height on S-day. Pontoon causeways were used to unload most of the LSTs, except at the eastern beaches, where dry-ramp landings were found possible, contrary to pre-assault intelligence information. LVTs, DUKWs, and self-propelled pontoon barges were employed to unload the larger transports, most of which were ready to depart at the end of S-day in a fast convoy. Thereafter, a fast convoy and a slow convoy left each day, as the remaining ships were unloaded, until assault shipping completed unloading on 12 January. The surf was considerably higher on 10 January, and most of the pontoon barges and causeways became inoperative, slowing the unloading considerably. Conditions were improved, however, on 11 and 12 January.

Enemy Attacks in the Landing Area.

339. Smoke screens were laid at sunrise and sunset in the transport areas on and after S-day. These were very effective in protecting the transports, but suicide planes succeeded in inflicting considerable damage on the comparatively exposed screening vessels. On 10 January, LERAY WILSON (DE) and ALLEN M. SUMNER (DD) received minor damage, and on 12 January, GILLIGAN (DE), RICHARD W. SUESENS (DE), and BELKNAP (APD) also suffered minor damage from suiciders.

340. At 0310 on 10 January, several enemy assault demolition boats carrying depth-charges made suicide attacks in the transport area, resulting in the sinking of LCI(M) 974; abandonment of LCI(G) 365; serious damage to WARHAWK (AP) and LST 1028; and minor damage to ROBINSON (DD), PHILIP (DD), and LSTs 610 and 925. An expedition of LCI(G)s and LCI(M)s was organized to search out enemy suicide craft along the coast during the day, but no more were found.

Withdrawal of Assault Shipping.

341. Convoys departing from LINGAYEN Gulf were covered during the first part of their passage by the newly organized LINGAYEN Defense Force, which included escort carriers. Seaplane patrols were also established in LINGAYEN Gulf, and conducted barrier patrols and night searches, commencing on S-day. The position of Task Force 38 in the South CHINA Sea after 10 January also afforded protection.

S-E-C-R-E-T

342. No ships were lost during the return trip to LEYTE, but several were attacked by suicide planes, with LST 700 receiving serious damage, and DUPAGE and ZEILIN (APAs) receiving minor damage.

Reinforcement and Supply.

343. On 11 January, the Reinforcement Group (Task Group 77.9) arrived with reserve troops after an uneventful passage. This group included two CVEs for air cover.

344. The second Supply Group (Task Group 78.9) arrived on 13 January, having suffered damage by suicide crashes to three merchant ships; the SS OTIS SKINNER, SS D. D. FIELD, and SS KYLE JOHNSON.

345. Other resupply echelons arrived as scheduled on 14, 15, 21, 26, and 27 January after uneventful passages, bringing reinforcements as well as supplies.

Ground Operations. (See Plate V).

346. The Commanding Generals of all four Assault Divisions assumed command of their forces ashore before dusk on S-day, and on 11 January, the Commanding Generals of the I and XIV Corps assumed command in their respective areas, and the Advanced Headquarters of CinCSWPA was opened at DAGUPAN.

347. On 13 January, Lieut. General Krueger assumed command of all SIXTH Army forces ashore, and General MacArthur and his staff went ashore to his Advanced Headquarters at DAGUPAN.

348. The I Corps, which landed over SAN FABIAN beaches; was charged initially with operations on the eastern side of the Central Plains of LUZON; while the XIV Corps, which landed over LINGAYEN Beaches, conducted operations on the western side of the Central Plains.

349. Only slight opposition was encountered initially, but increasing resistance developed on the left flank, where the 43rd Division, reinforced by the 158th RCT, swung to the east and north, and found the enemy well deployed in depth and dug in along the DAMORTIS-RCSARIO road. Progress continued to be slow in this area, where the Japanese were evidently determined to hold at all cost the approaches to the mountain passes to northern LUZON.

350. The vital air base at LINGAYEN was found suitable for light aircraft supporting operations. Safe emergency landings were made on the strip on 10 January, but safe take-offs were not possible until 12 January. On the 17th, carrier aircraft were relieved of all supporting missions on LUZON.

351. In the south, it became evident that the enemy had no intention of defending the Central Plains in force. Advance in that direction developed into free maneuver warfare, in which movement was limited only by the ability of logistics agencies to keep pace.

352. West of CLARK Field and Fort STOTSENBURG, enemy forces held strongly in mountain positions, from which they could place harassing fire on the airfields.

S-E-C-R-E-T

353. By the end of the month, the XIV Corps on the south had seized CLARK and MABALACAT Airfields, with much airfield equipment and many immobilized aircraft, and had reached CALUMPIT. The I Corps to the north was maintaining pressure against strong enemy forces blocking their way into BAGUIO, and to the east was rapidly eliminating organized resistance along routes north into the CAGAYAN Valley.

354. Guerilla forces contributed materially throughout the campaign, conducting wide-spread demolition and sabotage of enemy installations.

Minor Supporting Landings.

355. General - - Although not actually part of the LINGAYEN Operation, there were two minor amphibious landings in January which constituted direct support for the drive to recapture MANILA. One of these was near SUBIC Bay, and the other at NASUGBU, south of the entrance to MANILA Bay.

356. SAN ANTONIO Landings - - On 29 January, a force of about 35,000 troops, principally of the 38th Infantry Division (reinforced), and the 34th RCT of the 24th Infantry Division, were landed near SAN ANTONIO (about 15 miles northwest of SUBIC Bay). No opposition whatever was encountered, as guerillas were found to be already in control of the area.

357. GRANDE Island Landings - - On the following day (30 January), one battalion of the 38th Infantry Division, which had reembarked from the SAN ANTONIO area in four APDs and MONITOR (LSV), landed and took over GRANDE Island, a fortified island at the mouth of SUBIC Bay. There were several coast defense guns on this island, but they were not manned by the Japanese, and there was again no opposition. LCI(L)s were sent in to SUBIC Bay to reconnoitre, and reported that troops which had been landed near SAN ANTONIO the previous day had already reached OLONGAPO against only light resistance. By 1700, the entire SUBIC Bay area was under our control.

358. Naval Forces Involved - - Troops were transported to both landing areas in an Attack Group under Rear Admiral A. D. Struble, composed of 1 AGC, 13 APA, 4 AP, 7 AKA, 2 AK, 1 LSV, 5 APD, 35 LST, 6 LSM, 10 AM, 20 YMS, and 19 miscellaneous small craft, escorted by 7 DD and 7 DE.

359. A Fire Support Unit composed of DENVER (CL), and FLETCHER and RADFORD (DDs), covered both landings, and was available for gunfire support if needed. No bombardment was carried out, however, when it became evident that the landings would be unopposed.

360. Direct air support for the landings was furnished by Task Group 77.4 under Rear Admiral W. D. Sample, which was now composed of 6 CVEs (NATOMA BAY, MARCUS ISLAND, SAVO ISLAND, STEAMER BAY, PETROF BAY, and TULAGI), screened by 6 DD and 4 DE. This group operated in an area off MANILA Bay during 29 and 30 January.

361. During the morning of 30 January, CAVALIER (APA), in a return convoy from the SAN ANTONIO area, was torpedoed off SUBIC Bay by a submarine. She did not sink, and was towed to LEYTE. Carrier aircraft sighted an enemy submarine near the area about noon, and a hunter-killer group consisting of TULAGI (CVE), LAVALETTE and JENKINS (DDs), and GOSS and ULVERT M. MOORE (DEs), commenced operations which lasted until noon of the next day. Three attacks by LAVALETTE produced negative results.

362. No other attacks at this time on naval forces were reported.

S-E-C-R-E-T

363. NASUGBU Landings - - On 31 January, two RCTs of the 11th Airborne Division were landed by a separate Attack Group under Rear Admiral W. M. Fechteler at NASUGBU, south of the entrance to MANILA Bay, in order to outflank the troops defending MANILA. The other RCT of the 11th Airborne Division was to be landed by parachute on TAGAYTAY Ridge, approximately 14 miles inland from the beachhead.

364. A short preliminary bombardment was carried out, with no return fire, and the troops landed on schedule, with only light opposition which was quickly eliminated. The amphibiously landed troops advanced rapidly inland toward junction with the airborne assault which was made on 3 February.

365. Naval Forces Involved - - The covering group (one CL and two DD) was the same as for the SAN ANTONIO landings, and direct air support was furnished by the same CVE group. The Attack Group consisted of 1 CGC, 4 APD, 35 LCI, 8 LSM, 6 LST, 6 DD, 3 DE, and 27 miscellaneous small craft.

366. No attacks were made on the group until about 2245, when an estimated six suicide boats were driven off by the screen, but succeeded in sinking PC 1129.

C. SOUTHWEST PACIFIC LOSSES.

SEVENTH Fleet Losses.

367. Complete data on January SEVENTH Fleet ship losses is not available at this time, but from such information as is at hand the following estimate is made:

Sunk:

Combatant: - 1 CVE, 3 DMS, 2 PT, 1 PC.

Auxiliary: - 1 AVP, 1 LSM, 2 LCI, 1 IX.

Damaged:

Combatant: - 4 BB, 2 CA, 1 CL, 6 CVE, 7 DD, 6 DE,
2 DMS, 1 CM, 2 PT, 1 Australian CA.

Auxiliary: - 4 APA, 1 AP, 1 AO, 11 LST, 1 LSM,
3 APD, 1 ATF, 1 AVP.

Enemy Losses.

368. The Commander SEVENTH Fleet estimated the following damage to the enemy fleet and shipping inflicted during January by all forces under CinCSWPA:

Sunk:

Combatant: - 4 DD, 1 CM, 1 XPG.

Auxiliary: - 1 XAN, 1 XAV, 1 LSM, 10 AK, 5 AO, 1 AP.

Damaged:

Combatant: - 3 DD, 2 DE, 1 PC, 1 PG.

Auxiliary: - 4 AO, 4 AK.

Aircraft Losses.

369. Accurate figures for aircraft losses in the Southwest Pacific are not available at this time.

S-E-C-R-E-T

D. OPERATIONS OF SEVENTH FLEET SUBMARINES.

(Included herein on account of relationship to Pacific Ocean Areas Operations.)

Summary of Ships Sunk or Damaged.

370. Commander SEVENTH Fleet reported the following damage to the enemy by submarines under his command during the month of January: (Included in Southwest Pacific LOSSES, Section C.)

Ships Sunk: - (18,520 tons)*
Combatant: - 1 DD, 1 CM, 1 XPG, 1 XAN.
Auxiliary: - 3 AK, 2 AO.

Ships Damaged: - (5,135 tons)*
Combatant: - 1 DD.
Auxiliary: - 1 AO.

* Includes tonnage of auxiliaries only.

Analysis.

371. Total ships reported sunk or damaged by SEVENTH Fleet submarines in January were 11, compared with 21 in December. Nine ships were sunk in January, compared with 14 ships sunk in December. The decrease in damage inflicted on the enemy by SEVENTH Fleet submarines was due to the decrease in enemy shipping in the patrol areas - FLORES, JAVA and South CHINA Seas. Furthermore, strikes by the SECOND Carrier Task Force, Pacific, during January against targets in the South CHINA Sea area undoubtedly kept a good part of enemy shipping in port during the month.

Important Patrols.

372. For the month of January, BLACKFIN was credited by Commander SEVENTH Fleet with the sinking of 11,500 tons of enemy shipping, including one large tanker and a destroyer. BESUGO, on her third war patrol, coordinated the operations of from two to seven submarines, and made four attacks herself. One attack was unsuccessful. The second attack was a night surface attack, in which a large tanker, escorted by a destroyer and two destroyer escorts, was destroyed by three hits from six torpedoes. BESUGO's third and fourth attacks resulted in the damaging of a tanker and the sinking of a destroyer (this destroyer was sunk in February and is not included in the total damage to enemy shipping for January reported by Commander SEVENTH Fleet as shown above). BOARFISH sank one large AK and damaged another on her first war patrol in the South CHINA Sea off the coast of INDO-CHINA. CAVALLA, on her third war patrol, sank an enemy destroyer on 25 November, and later sank a small tanker and a small AO, for a total of 6200 tons. She also performed important reconnaissance duty in connection with the PHILIPPINE Islands campaign.

E. ANTI-SUBMARINE ACTIVITY.

373. During January, enemy submarine activity in Southwest Pacific waters was concentrated in the PHILIPPINE Area, and on the LEYTE-HOLLANDIA and LEYTE-MINDORO-LINGAYEN convoy routes.

374. On 5 January, at 1505, while en route from SAN PEDRO Bay to LINGAYEN Gulf, the PHOENIX (CL) sighted a midget submarine while seven miles due south of APO

S-E-C-R-E-T

Island. Shortly thereafter, two torpedoes passed astern. TAYLOR (DD) was directed to attack the submarine, and at 1530 rammed and depth-charged the enemy. The Commanding Officer of the TAYLOR believed the submarine was sunk. TAYLOR's sound gear was damaged due to the ramming of the submarine.

375. On the same day at 1621, while in the area of the above attack, LSTs 125 and 463, while in convoy en route AITAPE, NEW GUINEA to SAN FABIAN, sighted a mid-get submarine. The enemy fired two torpedoes, but no damage was done to the convoy.

376. CAVALIER (APA) was torpedoed on 30 January at position 14°-48' N., 119°-18' E. The vessel was struck on the portside aft in the vicinity of the shaft alley. She remained afloat, and was towed to LEYTE.

377. On the morning of 30 January, two VFs of Task Group 77.4 sighted a surfaced enemy submarine about 18 miles from the above position. The enemy immediately submerged and hunter-killer operations were begun in the area by two VT from TULAGI (CVE), JENKINS and LAVALLETTE (DDs), and ULVERT M. MOORE and GOSS (DEs). The operations were continued the following day with negative results.

378. At sundown on 31 January, BOISE (CL) made radar contact with a surfaced submarine at a point 105 miles from the sighting on 30 January. Between 2112 on 31 January and 0015 on 1 February, BELL, O'BANNON, and JENKINS (DDs) and ULVERT M. MOORE (DE) attacked the submarine (in position 13°-20' N., 119° -20' E.) with depth-charges and hedgehogs. Cominch assessed the submarine as "probably damaged".

379. Commander Task Group 77.4 believed that there was more than one enemy submarine operating in the area, and it is possible that the contacts on 30 January and 31 January were different submarines.

F. LAND-BASED AIR OPERATIONS.

(See Plate I.)

Air Support of LUZON Operations.

380. Enemy air power and shipping in the PHILIPPINES having been partially neutralized by 1 January 1945, operations of the Far Eastern Air Forces during January were concentrated for the most part in support of the amphibious assault on LINGAYEN Gulf initiated on the 9th. Heavy, medium, and fighter bombers struck daily at such enemy shipping as remained off the north and west coasts of LUZON, and also attacked enemy communication lines and pounded enemy airfields in the Central Plains of LUZON. A total of 2238 tons of bombs was dropped on the island by the 2552 planes sortieing, while MINDANAO received 150 tons, PALAWAN 120, and the VISAYAS 437 tons.

381. During the period from 25 December to 16 January, the air forces reported damaging or destroying the following: 79 locomotives (50% of the pre-war total), 456 railway cars (25% of the pre-war total), 468 motor trucks, 67 staff cars, 18 tanks, 5 armored cars, 10 field pieces, and 3 caissons. In addition, many bridges were destroyed and important highways bombed.

382. On 2 January, three squadrons of light bombers attacked enemy shipping at SAN FERNANDO (LINGAYEN Gulf), and reported sinking 1 seaplane tender, 1 4000-ton AP, 2 AP/AK of 5000 tons each, 2 AO of 2000 tons, and 7 small craft, ranging in size

S-E-C-R-E-T

from 300 to 1000 tons. In addition, they damaged or probably sank a large gunboat, 1 4000-ton AK/AP, 2 DE, and 3 stack-aft vessels of 300-1000 tons.

383. On 6-7 January, THIRD Fleet carrier planes, in well-executed strikes on LUZON, contributed to the neutralization of enemy air strength in the PHILIPPINES when they destroyed 111 enemy aircraft. (This is related in detail elsewhere in this report.) The immediate consequence of this heavy blow, combined with SEVENTH Fleet and land-based plane attacks, is made apparent by a comparison of the estimated 128 combat sorties flown by the enemy on January 6th and 54 combat sorties on the 7th with the mere token opposition which he was able or willing to send aloft thereafter.

384. One of the outstanding air battles of the month occurred on 11 January, when two P-51s are reported to have shot down 10 of 13 enemy aircraft over BALETE Pass, with one pilot accounting for six fighters and a bomber, and the other pilot shooting down three fighters.

385. On 17 January, the Far Eastern Air Forces assumed responsibility for air operations over all LUZON, relieving Navy carrier planes of support missions and defense of the LINGAYEN Area.

386. Army aircraft damaged a 7500-ton AO and a 5000-ton AK on the northwest coast of LUZON, on the 19th, and on the same day, Navy planes ranged north toward FORMOSA to sink an LSM. On the 24th, Army aircraft damaged a 10,000-ton AO at Cape BOJEADOR off the northwest tip of LUZON. This concluded the month's attacks on shipping in the LUZON area by aircraft of the Southwest Pacific Area.

Aerial Activity in Other Sectors.

387. Forty-five heavy bombers attacked MIRI in northwest BORNEO on the 5th, in a mission noteworthy for the lack of enemy air opposition. Only one aircraft was destroyed on the ground, and a single fighter made an ineffective pass at our formation.

388. With air supremacy established over LUZON, the focal point of the air war shifted to FORMOSA, where three heavy bombers started large fires at the HEITO Air-drome on the night of 13-14 January. On the 22nd, FORMOSA was subjected to the first daylight raid by PHILIPPINES-based B-24s attacking in strength and with escort. The same day, BRUNEI Bay, BORNEO, was attacked by Army aircraft, which sank a 2000-ton AK. KEELUNG (KIRUN) in north FORMOSA was visited by Navy planes on the 24th, a 4000-ton AK being damaged. On the 27th, Navy planes off the southern point of FORMOSA damaged a 2000-ton freighter. The following day, Army aircraft damaged a PC boat off LOMBOK.

389. On the 29th, 18 Liberators, escorted by 31 fighters, visited HEITO Air-drome again, destroying an estimated 22 aircraft on the ground and six in the air, in addition to two probables. Navy planes over the SAKISHIMA GUNTO the same day sank a 2000-ton tanker, and others damaged a 7500-ton AO off the west coast of FORMOSA. The last day of the month witnessed the damaging by Army planes of two destroyers, one of which was identified as the MOMO, in the waters southwest of FORMOSA, while 24 B-24s are reported to have destroyed 25 to 30 grounded aircraft in the OKAYAMA-HEITO area.

S-E-C-R-E-T

Summary.

390. In all, 7717 sorties were flown by planes of the Southwest Pacific Area during January, to drop 6440 tons of bombs on targets ranging from BOUGAINVILLE on the east to LOMBOK on the west, and from FORMOSA on the north to TIMOR on the south. This marked a decrease of 448 sorties from the December figure, while the tonnage of bombs declined by 758.

Disposition of Aircraft in the PHILIPPINES in December and January 1944-45.

<u>December</u>	<u>January</u>
<u>LUZON</u>	<u>LUZON</u>
- - - - -	1 Fighter Squadron
- - - - -	1 Night Fighter Squadron
- - - - -	1 Headquarters Squadron
- - - - -	1 Patrol Bombing Squadron
<u>MINDORO</u>	<u>MINDORO</u>
2 Fighter Groups	3 Fighter Groups
1 Night Fighter Squadron	1 Night Fighter Squadron
2 Reconnaissance Squadrons	2 Reconnaissance Squadrons
- - - - -	1 Photographic Squadron
- - - - -	1 Patrol Bombing Squadron
- - - - -	1 Light Bomber Squadron
- - - - -	1 Troop Carrier Squadron
<u>LEYTE</u>	<u>LEYTE</u>
2 Fighter Groups	2 Fighter Groups
4 Marine Fighter Squadrons	4 Marine Fighter Squadrons
5 Patrol Bombing Squadrons	7 Patrol Bombing Squadrons
1 Light Bomber Group	1 Light Bomber Group
1 Air Combat Camera Unit	1 Air Combat Camera Unit
	1 Medium Bomber Group
	1 Heavy Bomber Group
	1 Troop Carrier Group
	1 Troop Carrier Squadron
	1 Night Fighter Squadron
	1 Photographic Squadron
<u>SAMAR</u>	<u>SAMAR</u>
- - - - -	1 Heavy Bomber Group
- - - - -	1 Marine Observation Squadron
- - - - -	2 Marine Fighter Squadrons

PART VII.

MISCELLANEOUS

A. UNITS REPORTING TO THE PACIFIC FLEET.

391. During January, the following combatant units reported to the U. S. Pacific Fleet: GUAM (CB); RANDOLPH, SHANGRI LA (CVs); PITTSBURGH (CA); VICKSBURG (CL); ZELLARS, HARRY E. HUBBARD (DDs); FORREST, RODMAN (DMSs); HERNDON (APD); WILLIAMS, PRESLEY, WISEMAN, WILLIAMSON, THADDEUS PARKER (DEs); HACKLEBACK, TIRANTE, CHUB, TENCH, SPRINGER, LAMPREY, BUGARA, TIGRONE (SSs); 5 PCE; 1 PC; 3 PCM.

392. Auxiliaries reporting included: 8 APA, 12 AKA, 1 AO, 4 AOG, 6 ATA, 2 AD, 9 APD, 2 ATR, 1 AF, 5 AM, 1 YO, 2 ATF, 1 AR, 2 DM, 1 ARL, 1 YTB, 1 ARS, 1 AGC, 31 IST, 42 LCI, 19 LSM, 14 LCS.

B. MAJOR COMMAND CHANGES.

393. A new command, (Commander Air Force, Subordinate Command, Forward Area), was established on 17 January, with Rear Admiral E. L. Gunther in command. The purpose of the new command was to coordinate and supervise activities in the Forward Area for which Commander Air Force, Pacific Fleet is responsible.

394. On 26 January, Admiral R. A. Spruance, Commander FIFTH Fleet, assumed command of the Central Pacific Task Forces, relieving Admiral W. F. Halsey, Jr., Commander THIRD Fleet.

395. On 27 January, Rear Admiral E. Buckmaster became Commander Western Carolines Sub-Area, vice Rear Admiral J. W. Reeves, Jr.

C. CASUALTIES TO VESSELS.

396. A number of casualties to vessels are described in other parts of this report, in addition to which several unrelated casualties are described below.

USS MAZAMA (AE-9).

397. On 12 January, while at anchor in ULITHI Harbor, MAZAMA's officer-of-the-deck sighted what appeared to be a periscope on the starboard quarter, distance about 1500 yards. One minute later an explosion occurred close aboard the port bow, and the ship started settling by the head. At the time of the explosion, MAZAMA had on board 5335 short tons of ammunition. There were no further explosions, but Number One hold was flooded to the second deck level. Efficient salvage work by the ship's company and forces under Commander Service Squadron TEN was sufficient to prevent further serious flooding. Damage to MAZAMA included Numbers One and Two 3-inch guns totally out of commission, damage to ship's forward magazine, Number One hold, Number One, Two, and Three double bottoms, Number One deep tank and emergency fire pump room flooded, hull distorted inboard between frames 124 to 162 with maximum indentation of three feet, and other minor structural damage, and damage to auxiliary machinery.

S-E-C-R-E-T

LCI(L) 600.

398. On 12 January, while anchored off MANGEJANG Island inside of ULITHI Harbor, LCI(L) 600 was sunk by an underwater explosion of an undetermined source. As a result of the explosion, 2 men were killed, 1 missing, and 35 wounded.

LCI(G) 396.

399. Early in the morning of 18 January, LCI(G) 396, while on patrol in the vicinity of the PALAU Islands, struck a mine. The bow of the craft forward of frame Number 40 was blown off and sunk. Casualties were 4 dead, 3 missing, and 27 wounded. The craft was decommissioned and reclassified as IX 212.

LARDNER (DD 487).

400. LARDNER grounded on a shoal off NGESEBUS Island, PALAU, on 29 January. Two forward peak tanks were flooded and the ram bow was buckled back to frame number five.

SERPENS (AK 97).

401. The SERPENS, while anchored off LUNGA Beach, GUADALCANAL, was sunk on 29 January by an explosion, due possibly to an enemy submarine attack. There were only 10 survivors. An anti-submarine search was instituted immediately in the area, but with negative results.

EXTRACTOR (ARS 15).

402. EXTRACTOR was unfortunately sunk on 24 January by GUARDFISH (SS) due to mistaken identity. Six men were missing from the EXTRACTOR.

LCI(G) 404.

403. Early in the morning of 8 January, LCI(G) 404 while on patrol in YOO Passage, PALAU Group, was attacked by swimmers carrying explosive charges. All the enemy were killed by gunfire from the LCI 404, except one swimmer who was seen to dive under the fantail. Immediately afterwards, an underwater explosion occurred against the steering engine room of the LCI 404. She was towed into SCHONIAN Harbor at daybreak with the following damage: steering engine room almost destroyed; port rudder missing and starboard rudder needing replacement, and some hull damage.

YP 73.

404. While on local patrol, YP 73 struck a reef 1000 yards east of SPRUCE Cape Signal Station on KODIAK Island at 2300 on 15 January. Rough seas with 20 knot winds prevailed, and the vessel broke up at once. The Coast Guard Cutter BITTER-SWEET (CG 1466) rescued six of her crew, but 10 others, who abandoned ship in a dory and on a life raft, died due to exposure.

D. OPERATIONS OF BRITISH EAST INDIES FLEET.

405. The operations of British Forces described here, while not under the command of Cincpac-Cincpoa, are set forth in brief because of their strategic relationship to operations in the Pacific Ocean Areas.

406. Principal fleet operations during the month were carrier strikes on PALEMBANG in southeastern SUMATRA on the 24th and 29th, and support of amphibious operations along the western coast of BURMA and against islands off shore. Mine-laying and submarine activity continued.

407. In the carrier attacks on SUMATRA, surprise was achieved, and 26 Japanese aircraft were reported destroyed in the air, in addition to 34 on the ground in the first attack. The quality of enemy air opposition, like that experienced by the U.S. THIRD Fleet at Cape St. JAMES, was poor, enemy pilots appearing to be still in a training status. Photographs indicated that substantial numbers of enemy aircraft were located in the MEDAN Area, an estimated 50 being operational. Heavy damage was caused to enemy oil and aviation gas installations at PALEMBANG.

408. Amphibious operations were carried out at AKYAB with success on 3 January, thus gaining that strategically important Burmese port for Allied use. No opposition to the landings was experienced, the Japanese having withdrawn just prior to the British landings. The AKYAB operation was followed on 9 January by successful landing of assault forces on the MYERON Peninsula.

409. Later in the month, fleet forces moved farther south, supporting the Army's occupation of the island of RAMREE off the west coast of BURMA. Opposition was light at first, but grew heavier as the assault progressed inland. Still farther south, a landing was made on 26 January on the west coast island of CHEEUBA.

410. These operations of the British Forces during January constituted a substantial contribution toward the reconquest of BURMA.

E. CHINA BASED AIR FORCES.

411. The operations of the XX Bomber Command and the Fourteenth Air Force from CHINA bases were carried on much as in prior months. Their operations were coordinated with those under Cincpac-Cincpoa, but were not under his command. The B-29s of the XX Bomber Command flew eight missions in January, while Fourteenth Air Force planes continued to assist operations in the Pacific Ocean Areas by searches, attacks on shipping, and destruction of enemy aircraft.

412. B-29 missions attacked the following targets in January: BANGKOK (2 January), the OMURA Aircraft Plant in JAPAN (6 January), KEELUNG Harbor and shipping in FORMOSA (9 January), SINGAPORE (11 January), FORMOSA Airfields (14 and 17 January), SAIGON (27 January), and SINGAPORE again (31 January). The three strikes on FORMOSA during the period of the LINGAYEN landings, combined with THIRD Fleet attacks there, undoubtedly served to disrupt seriously movement of Japanese aircraft to the south.

413. During the month, Fourteenth Air Force aircraft are reported to have sunk 15 enemy ships totalling 13,500 tons, and to have damaged or probably sunk 34 other ships totalling approximately 39,000 tons. The outstanding strikes of the month occurred in the SHANGHAI Area between 16 and 20 January, where it is estimated that nearly 130 enemy planes were destroyed on the ground.

S-E-C-R-E-T

ANNEX A.

COMMENTS AND CONCLUSIONS

1. The general performance of all units and branches of the Pacific Fleet during the month of January 1945 was highly satisfactory. There appear to be no matters inviting comment beyond that included in the main body of this report.

ALLIED AIR STRIKES

JANUARY 1945

CENTRAL, SOUTH, SOUTHWEST PACIFIC

LEGEND=

CARRIER STRIKES
SHOWING POINTS
ATTACKED.

LANDBASED STRIKES
SHOWING BASES FROM
WHICH LAUNCHED AND
POINTS ATTACKED.

TONS OF BOMBS,
CARRIER. 100

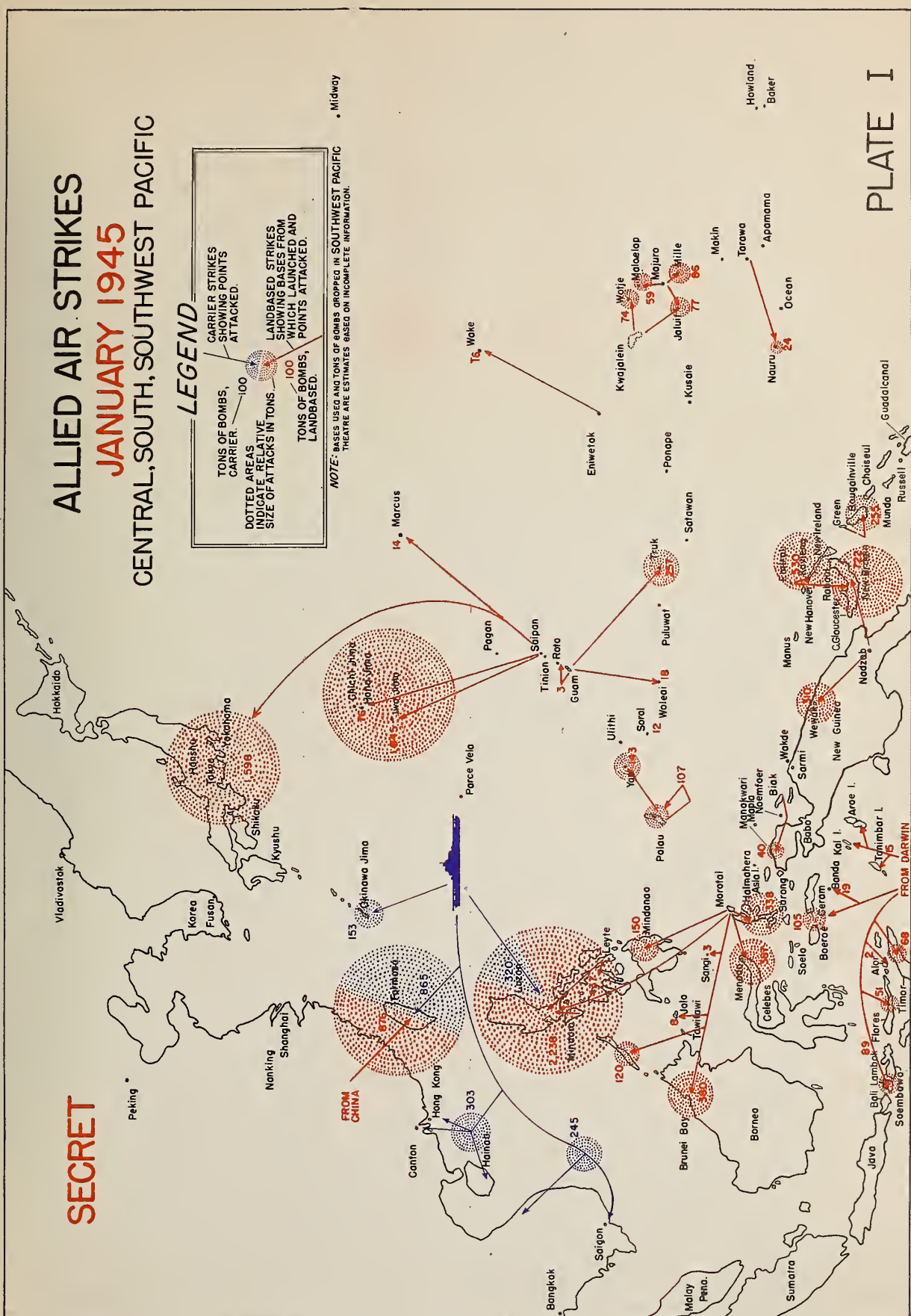
TONS OF BOMBS,
LANDBASED. 100

DOTTED AREAS
INDICATE RELATIVE
SIZE OF ATTACKS IN TONS.

NOTE: BASES USED AND TONS OF BOMBS DROPPED IN SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATRE ARE ESTIMATES BASED ON INCOMPLETE INFORMATION.

Midway

PLATE I



FLEET TRACK FAVORABLE
WEATHER, (mile).

FLEET TRACK, ADVERSE
WEATHER, (block).

FLEET POSITION, DRGO
ON DATE INDICATED.

FUELING AREA, DATE.

LAUNCHING AREA, DATE;
RELATED AIR STRIKES, DATE;
RESULTS.

ENEMY SHIPS SUNK.

ENEMY AIRCRAFT DESTROYED
ON GROUND, IN AIR.

U.S. AIRCRAFT LOSSES, COM-
BAT AND OPERATIONAL.

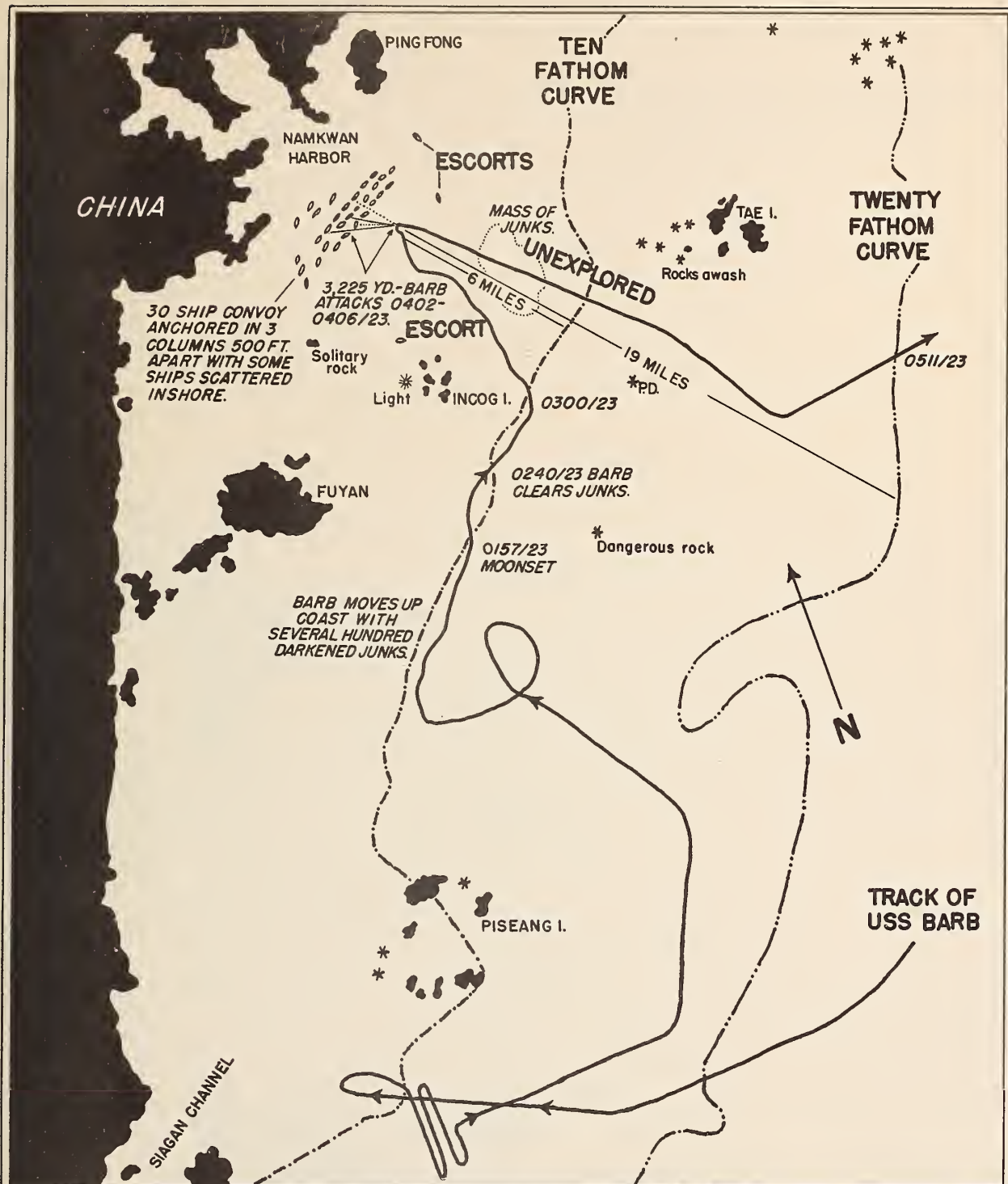
NOTE: * LEGEND FIGURES
ARE TOTAL FOR JAN.

SECRET

**NOTE: LEGEND FIGURES
ARE TOTAL FOR JAN.**



Fast Carrier Force Operations - January 1945



**USS BARB ATTACKS
ON ANCHORED CONVOY
IN NAMKWAN HARBOR
23 JANUARY 1945**

SECRET

PLATE IV

U.S. PROGRESS ASHORE LUZON AND MINDORO 31 JANUARY 1945

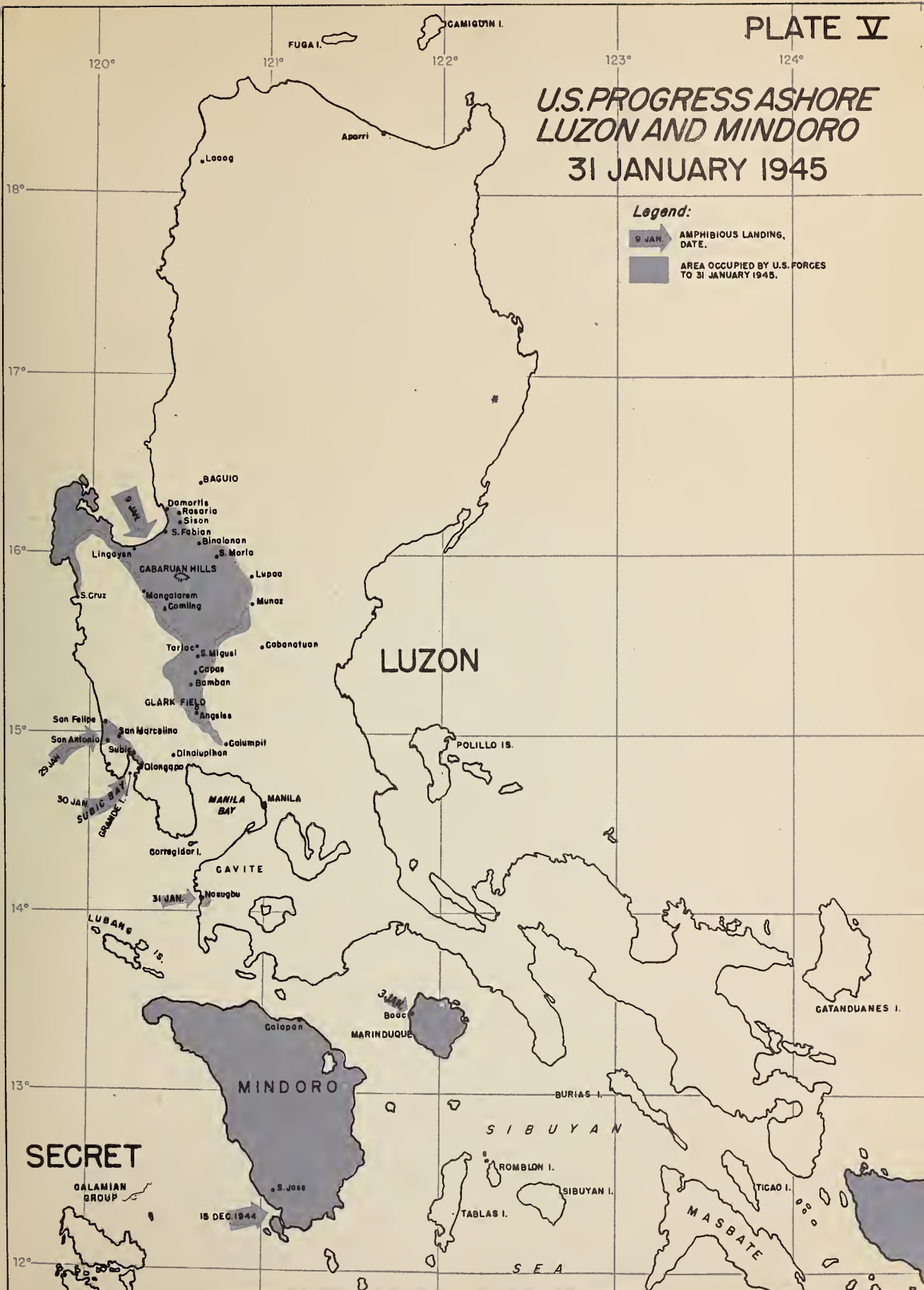
Legend:

9 JAN

AMPHIBIOUS LANDING,
DATE.



AREA OCCUPIED BY U.S. FORCES
TO 31 JANUARY 1945.



SECRET

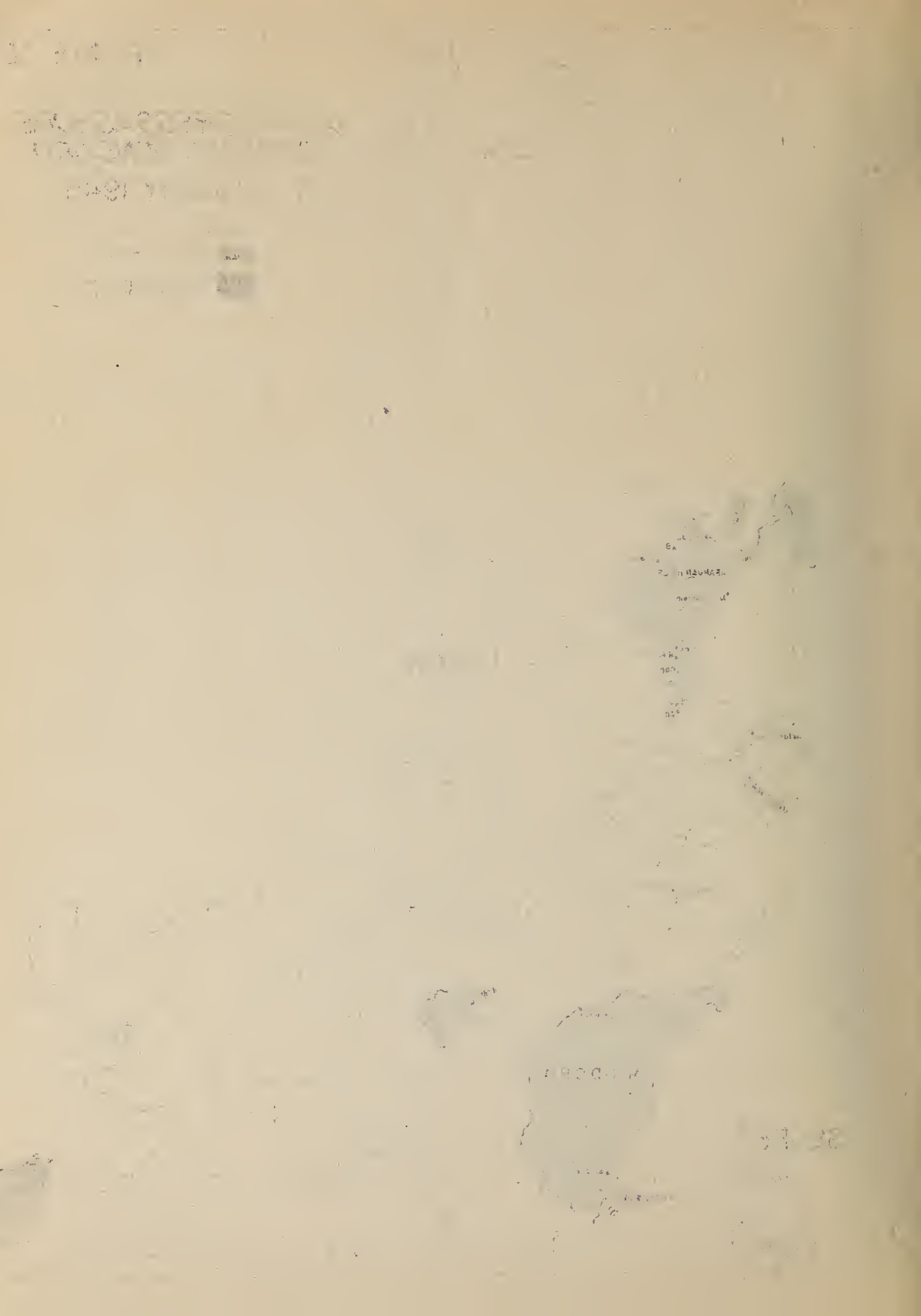


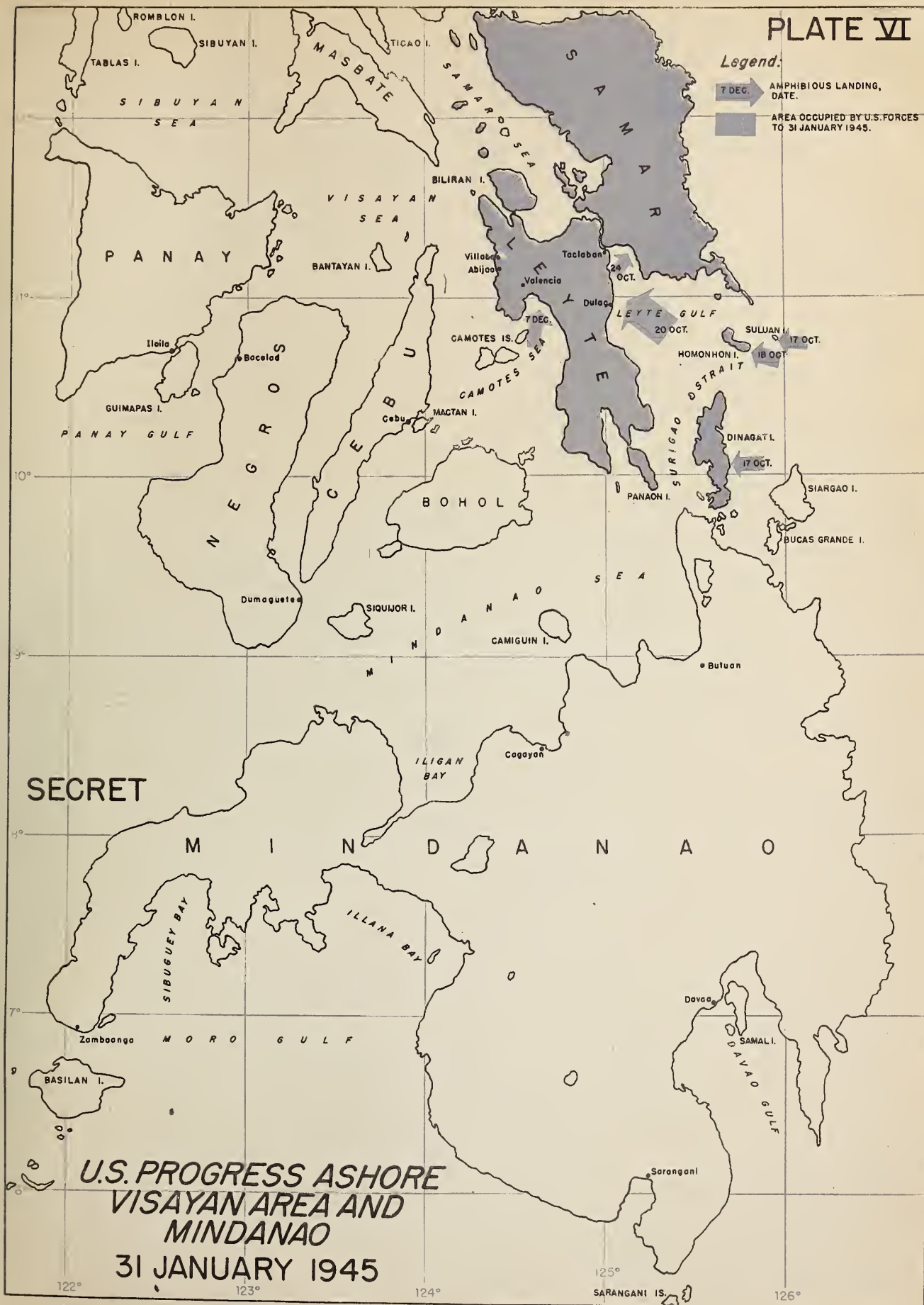
PLATE VI

Legend:

7 DEG.

AMPHIBIOUS LANDING, DATE.

AREA OCCUPIED BY U.S. FORCES TO 31 JANUARY 1945.



SECRET

**U.S. PROGRESS ASHORE
VISAYAN AREA AND
MINDANAO
31 JANUARY 1945**

DECLASSIFIED
DDO DIR 5200.9